

Pocket Series
No. 144.

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POCKET NOVELS



The Red Scalper. 144



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THE RED SCALPER;

OR,

THE MAID OF ONEIDA.

BY W. J. HAMILTON,

AUTHOR OF THE FOLLOWING POCKET NOVELS:

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NEW YORK:
BEADLE AND ADAMS, PUBLISHERS,
98 WILLIAM STREET.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 187 by
BEADLE AND COMPANY,
In the office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

THE RED SCALPER.

CHAPTER I

THE APPARITION OF THE STREAM.

A GLIMPSE of wild and beautiful scenery, such as we might have seen before the ax of civilization had swept the forests, and the plow and drag had leveled the hills. Before the eye has time to dwell a moment on the scene, its quiet beauty is marred by the presence of men, Indians in their war-paint, seven in number. They glide by like silent ghosts, their feet awakening no echoes, and their eyes bent upon something rising against the eastern sky.

What was it? The smoke of a distant fire! As the vulture scents his prey from afar off, so the Indians' eyes and ears are always ready. The Hurons—for they belonged to the tribe which, during the French and Indian struggle, did most damage to the English—had seen the smoke from afar, and were on their way to surprise the builders, whoever they might be.

The leading chief was a strange-looking fellow, small of stature, but lithe and sinewy to a wonderful degree. His body was naked to the waist, and painted in broad stripes of red, green and white, giving him a singularly grotesque and horrible appearance. At the first glance it would seem that this man was not much to be feared. But, a second look would have excited a doubt, for his eye was keen, dark and cunning. In short, there were not many upon the war-trail that year who would have cared to know that the "Weasel" was on their track. There was something wonderful in the manner in which he followed the trail. He did not raise his eyes from the earth, and moved on over the ground with a rapid step, although the "sign" was very obscure.

It was singular that men who had taken such pains to conceal their whereabouts, should build a fire, and with wet wood

—for the smoke was black. The Weasel noticed this incongruity, and did not understand it. He made out that two persons had passed—one of them an Indian, of the Onondaga tribe, and the other a white man.

The Hurons pressed on hurriedly. The fire was now near at hand, and the smoke rose thicker. The Weasel whispered some hurried orders to his followers and loosened his weapons for the struggle he thought so near at hand. He was noted for his agility and address in the use of knife and hatchet. Indeed, he seemed to depend upon these more than upon fire-arms, for he carried two hatchets and two knives.

No word was spoken now. The red-men crept on silently toward the smoke. It was on the top of a hill which rose in the midst of the forest. They climbed the hill and surrounded the opening. Then, at the signal from their leader, they rushed in.

The opening was empty! The smoke still rose, but not from any fire they could see. It seemed to come from a pile of stones which lay upon the crest of the hill, against the root of a huge basswood. The Indians looked at one another in wonder. Naturally superstitious, they accepted this as something supernatural. Indeed, it was something hard to understand. The smoke still rose, apparently from the solid earth.

While they looked on in wonder, a peal of horrible laughter, which seemed to come from the earth beneath their feet, startled them. Even the Weasel made a backward step, and one savage actually plunged into the bushes, from whence he peeped out at the strange scene. The Weasel was at his wit's end. He ran round the hill, searching for any opening, which might give a clue to this phenomena. There was none. The elevation was a rocky one, the bulk being solid limestone, and the rocks were piled in wild confusion on every side. But he could nowhere find any thing like an entrance to a cave.

“What is this?” said the Weasel. “A bad spirit has taken possession of the hill. Is the earth on fire under our feet? Let us go away, and seek in another place for scalps.”

“My brother says well,” said the Huron who stood next to

him. "It is not good for us to be here. A bad Manitou is in the earth."

Again that shout; but this time it was accompanied by another sound which had nothing supernatural in it, the crack of a rifle. The Indian who had last spoken, dropped in his tracks. His comrades ran to raise him, but he was dead. A wild laugh followed the deed, and then all was silent. At the sound of the rifle, most of the Hurons had bounded into the thicket. Only the Weasel and another man remained with their dead friend. They raised the body and hurried it into the woods.

"Away!" cried the Weasel. "Search the woods. Some one hides in the bushes, and Ish-pan-be-kan is dead. Let us find the dog who has slain our brother, and burn him with fire."

"Ish-pan-be-kan was a dog!" shouted a loud voice. "The Weasel is another. Let him look to himself. Did not Ish-pan-be-kan kill the young Englishman by the Oswego, last moon? He will wander no more by the silent river. I have avenged him."

All looked about for the speaker. Blank dismay was visible in every face. He was nowhere to be seen, and yet the voice seemed to come from the very center of the hill. Even the Weasel began to tremble.

"Let the Hurons beware of the English," cried the same stern voice. "Let them also look well to the Five Nations. They are many, they are strong. See that they do not sweep the Hurons from the earth in their anger. The Weasel will die the death of a skunk."

"Coward," hissed the Weasel. "Come forth like a man and meet me!"

"I am not a fool. If the Weasel wants me, let him come and find me. I am here, waiting."

This was followed by another shot, sent at random into the bushes, guided only by the voice of the Weasel. But it found a mark. It took the Weasel upon the tip of the nose, disfiguring him for life. He was a forest dandy, and proud of his face and form. No deeper injury could have been done him than this. He actually foamed at the mouth, and ran round and round the edge of the opening, looking in vain for

the man who had so marked him. No one was in sight, but the laughter and jeers never ceased.

"See," he cried, "I am an Onondaga. You are a Huron. The Hurons are dogs and the sons of dogs. They are fit for nothing but to hoe corn with the women. They have no eyes to see nor ears to hear or they would find me. The Weasel is a bat."

"I will never rest until I have found you, and burned you with fire," yelled the Weasel. "Ah-ha, a Huron am I! A chief of the great Algonquin nation. My name is Ne-mo-tou, the Weasel. Beware of my teeth!"

The man in hiding became silent all at once. For some reason he said no more, and again the Indians searched for some clue to his whereabouts. At length, one of them happened to strike with his hatchet upon the trunk of the bass-wood. It gave back a hollow sound. The Weasel uttered a cry of joy. Their enemy must be in the hollow tree. But, where had he entered? There was no opening which they could see. It must be somewhere among the branches. Examining the tree, the Weasel saw that some animal had been in the habit of climbing it, for the bark was much scratched and worn. He determined to find out for himself.

It was no difficult task to climb the tree, for many small branches grew out of the trunk which would bear the weight of as small a man as the little Indian. He ran up quickly, and gaining the crotch of the tree, uttered a second cry of joy. The basswood had been an old bear-tree. It was easy to tell that by the odor. The opening was just in the crotch between three great branches. The place in which the Weasel was seated was comfortable, and thinking that he had his enemy safe, he thought it a fine time to abuse him. But, to all he said his enemy answered not a word, though the Weasel could see that he was in motion, by the uncertain light at the bottom of the great tree.

"Hark, you fool," yelled the Huron. "You have shot off the end of my nose. I will burn you in the tree. Dog, you shall die! Beg for your life. Say that you will come and hoe my corn and cook my venison."

The concealed man made no reply, and the Weasel called to one of the Indians below and gave his orders. Three of

the men set to work with their hatchets to cut a hole in the side of the basswood monarch, while others went about collecting combustible material. They found a quantity of pitch-pine knots and some punk-wood. Two of these knots, and some of the punk they carried to their chief, who remained up in the tree-crotch, gloating over the revenge he was to have. He could hear something stirring uneasily in the hollow below.

"You are frightened" shouted he, down the opening. "The soul is gone out of your body. You fear me, dog that you are. You shall see that I know how to revenge a wrong."

He took out a flint and steel, with whose use he was acquainted, and soon lighted a piece of the punk. In a short time he had one of the torches blazing. He then lighted the other and flung the first down the funnel, upon the moving body below. A fearful roar of agony followed, and he could make out the smell of burning hair. A loud scratching noise succeeded, and the occupant of the tree was coming up. The Weasel prepared his hatchet and knife, ready to pounce upon his enemy the moment he showed himself. What was his surprise and terror when the muzzle of a huge bear appeared at the opening! The Weasel made a leap for the branch by which he had ascended, and gained it just in time to escape the blow that the infuriated beast made at him with his fore-paw, which took the feathered head-dress from him. This ornament Bruin tore in pieces at his leisure. The Weasel, the moment he touched the earth, was greeted by another peal of laughter from his hidden enemy.

"An Onondaga is not a fool, to hide in a hole with a bear," was shouted. "The Weasel is like a little dog, which puts its tail between its legs and runs away. He can do nothing. He has no eyes or ears. The Onondagas laugh at a fool."

The Indians soon brought down the bear with their muskets, and then began the search for the man who taunted them. While doing this, one of them received a wound in the shoulder. The Weasel saw that they were wasting time and men in the attempt, and like a good tactician, he determined to withdraw. But he did not go far. The moment

the woods concealed them from view he directed his men to lie down in the bushes and watch the hill. He was satisfied that time and patience would do the work he desired. A dead silence fell upon the scene, except those which may be heard in any forest. An hour passed, and yet the Hurons lay there without a sign of impatience. It seemed as if they were not to receive their reward. The concealed man made no sound, nor seemed likely to do so. What if, after all, it was the Spirit of the Rocks, they had been taught to believe in, and no mortal? They began to doubt, and yet, with true Indian cunning and patience, they waited.

The rise of ground was conical in shape, but upon one side descended abruptly, in shelf after shelf of limestone. A rugged, precipitous place, down which the Weasel had passed with difficulty in his search. From the side of the hill, at that spot, a small stream gushed and ran down the rocks. It was a stream born of the rocks, seeming to bubble up from the bowels of the earth, clear, cold and bright. The Weasel had perched himself on a tree directly opposite this spring. As he looked lazily down upon it, he saw the waters boil with renewed fury. The next moment they were dashed aside by a vigorous arm, and an Indian came out upon the platform of limestone, just in front of the water, and looked cautiously about him. The Weasel, in his surprise, nearly fell from his perch. There was something more wonderful in this than in what he had seen before. Surely it was a delusion. This person could not have risen from the waters. It was impossible. He shuddered, lest for the first time he looked upon a spirit.

The Indian on the rock was a noble-looking man, wearing the eagle feathers of a chief. There was something at once commanding and winning in his face and form. His strength must have been very great, for, while tall of stature, every limb was symmetrical and full of muscular power. He was dressed in a calico hunting-shirt, belted about the waist by a girdle of wampum. He was past the middle age, and his face had that peaceful expression which a face can only have when the soul is at rest. He was well armed with knife, hatchet and rifle. The latter he stooped and took from a crevice in the rock, just as the Weasel was beginning to

recover from his first fright. His quick eye roamed from point to point, and he satisfied himself that no one observed him. At least he seemed to think so, for he stooped and looked into the spring. As he rose again, that magnetic influence, which warns us of the presence of another even when our back is turned, drew his eyes toward the Weasel. He did not show by his face that he saw the Huron, but, sitting down upon a rock began to look at the priming of his gun. The Weasel had determined to wait, and follow him when he went away. All at once the rifle was pointed full at his head and he was ordered to descend.

"Look," said the Triton. "I never miss my aim. If you whisper a word, or raise a hand, you go to the happy hunting-ground."

"Eagle Eye!" gasped the Weasel.

"Red Hatchet, Red Hatchet!" replied the Onondaga, proudly. "I am Eagle Eye no more. Come down, Weasel of the Hurons, or I fire!"

The Weasel demurred a little, but the chief promptly repeated the order, in a tone which the Weasel could not fail to understand. They stood face to face, types of two different tribes. One, given heart and soul to the service of the French and their religion; the other a faithful soldier of England.

At the time of the fall of Oswego, when the great marquis made his famous raid upon that unprotected post, Eagle Eye and the noted young ranger and spy, Ralph Warren, were brother scouts, who did much harm to the French. But now the young white man had married, and the Onondaga chief was left alone. He loved the English from his soul, and fully conscious that his own people must pass away, he yet acknowledged the superiority of the master race. There was hardly a battle in the history of these times in which he did not have a part, hardly a march in which he did not take the advance and do his best to harass the enemy. Even when the troops were in camp, Eagle Eye was on the move, scouting about the fortified towns of the enemy, or the villages of the hostile Iroquois. He knew every hiding-place by lake or river, and had canoes concealed at various points for his use. Now you would hear of him at Montreal. Again he would

appear at Frontenac, or near Du Quesne. Then he would be in the Algonquin country, north of Ontario, seeking information for the good of the English. There was not a place in this section where that tireless foot had not trod at one time or another. The English knew his value and used him well. He asked no pay, except that they should supply him with powder and ball. But, even these he paid for in furs.

This was the man who faced the Weasel, upon that rocky ledge.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE TRAIL.

EVEN in that moment of peril, the Weasel did not forget his native cunning. He had come down from the tree, because in that place the Onondaga had him at an advantage, but he was far from designing to yield. They were sworn enemies, and had sought each other with steady malignity for four years. The atrocities which the Weasel had committed from time to time, had roused all that was savage in the nature of Red Hatchet. The manner of his change of name was peculiar to the Indians, who delight in giving their bravest men designations to commemorate some brave deed. In a sanguinary battle near Lake George, Eagle Eye had fought from sunrise until noon, and in the close grapple which succeeded the skirmishing, had cut his way through a body of Hurons, hatchet in hand. And, when the tiger strife was over, his hatchet was crimsoned from edge to bowl. His companions at once gave him the name which he now bore, of which he was justly proud.

The small, black eyes of the Weasel twinkled like stars, but he stood in a submissive attitude, with bent head, while Red Hatchet looked at him in the stern way peculiar to him when face to face with a villain.

"Weasel of the Hurons," he said, "you have seen spots upon the face of the sun at noon. They blot its fair surface. This is a beautiful land, but you, and such dogs as you, are

the blots upon its beauty. Those who love this land must be the ones to wipe its spots away. Weasel, you are doomed."

The Weasel said not a word, but his eyes still gleamed with a sort of metallic brightness, and Red Hatchet kept his rifle pointed at his breast.

"The Great Spirit made this land for the Mohawk, the Oneida, the Seneca, the Onondaga, the Cayuga and Tuscarora to dwell in. He did not make it that it should be polluted by the tread of the Huron. Weasel, for many years you have traversed this soil, and left red stains upon it, where your victims lay dead. Prepare to die. But I slay no man unawares. Red Hatchet is not so great a coward that he fears one man. See, I lay down my rifle. I have no arms but my knife and hatchet. You have the same. Let us fight it out here, and if I fall you have the scalp of a great brave to hang in your wigwam."

The Weasel hardly waited for the conclusion of the speech before he made a sudden leap and threw himself at the feet of the speaker. But it was not done as a token of submission, for his knife was in his hand, and he made a quick cut at the "Achilles" tendon. If it had not been for the surprising agility of Red Hatchet, the movement would have maimed him for life. Without turning, he bounded six feet backward, out of the way of the dangerous weapon. Foiled in his first design, the Weasel leaped to his feet, and pealing out his war-cry as a signal to his men, he came at his enemy with knife and hatchet. Red Hatchet was now prepared. He knew that the call would bring the warriors upon him, and what he did must be done quickly. He heard the patter of coming feet even as he closed with the Weasel. The right hand of the Huron was inclosed in his iron grip, and their knives, which each held in his left hand, were parrying the fierce blows they dealt. Even while making a pass, the Huron leaped upward, and planted both feet in the bosom of Red Hatchet. The shock was terrible and the strong man staggered, but only for a second. The effort he had made threw the Weasel off his balance, and before he could recover, his knife was wrenched from his grasp, and the strong left arm of the Onondaga inclosed him. It was all over with him then. The other Hurons were close at hand, but only in time

to see the stalwart chief raise their leader in his strong arms and dash him headlong down the rocks. The wretch went crashing through the underbrush below, shrieking for help. Red Hatchet shook his hand exultingly in the air, uttered a shout of defiance, and, bounding into the air, buried himself in the clear waters of the spring. The Hurons rushed forward. Here was a new puzzle. They could not see the bottom of the spring, only that it bubbled out from below a limestone boulder.

Where had he gone? Had he preferred this death to falling into their hands? It was more in the nature of the chief to die fighting when all hope was gone. The Hurons fell upon their knees and peered down into the depths of the spring. They could see nothing of the body. Where had he hid himself? They ran up and down the platform, vainly looking for some trace. They could make nothing out of this mystery.

"Red Hatchet is a fish," said one of the Hurons. "Once we chased him to the Lake Ontario, near Oswego. He plunged into the water and was gone. We looked for him, but we could not tell where he went. When we went away he was standing on the rock, shouting at us. We had a canoe. He stole it, and took it down into the deep water. Let us go away. We can do nothing with a fish."

"Let us find the Weasel," said another. "The Red Hatchet is very strong. The Weasel was a child in his hands."

They descended the rocks and found their unfortunate comrade lying senseless, with his face cut and bruised in a shocking manner from contact with the branches of the trees. But these very branches had saved him, for, when one of his men placed his hand upon his breast, he felt the heart beat faintly.

They lifted him and set about restoring him to consciousness. They found their efforts of but little avail for some time, until he uttered a sudden gasp, and rose to a sitting posture, staring at them from his mutilated visage in a savage way. He seemed in a mist, and opened his mouth to spit out three of his front teeth. Then he rose with the snarl of a tiger.

"Where is he?" gasped the wounded man.

"Gone; dive in water," said "Hole-in-the-cloud," a chief who had accompanied him. "Red Hatchet is a fish."

The Weasel rose slowly to his feet, the fires of malignant passion in his eyes.

"The Huron villages shall never see the Weasel until Eagle Eye, Red Hatchet, sleeps the last sleep. Let him hide where he will; I am the avenger to find him out."

"And now come. It is time for us to meet the Oncidas. Long before this we should have been upon the way."

The Indians followed him at a quick pace, and the forest hid them from view. Hardly had they left when the water of the fountain was again troubled, and Red Hatchet sprung into view, and climbed out upon the rock, shaking the water from his hunting-shirt, and laughing lightly at the discomfiture of his enemy. He was followed immediately by a young man in a tasty uniform of green, the dress of the rifle rangers attached to the Colonial army. He was a handsome fellow, not far from four-and-twenty, with a well-knit, sinewy frame, and a frank, good-humored face. They did not stay long on the rock. The young man removed a cover of oiled silk from a beautiful rifle he carried, and Red Hatchet drew a similar weapon from the crevice where he had hidden it.

"This is an adventure," said the young ranger, laughing. "It opens well. You have made an enemy for life, Red Hatchet."

"Do I fear the Weasel of the Hurons?" said the Onondaga, proudly. "Not I! When he is ready to meet me, be it with knife, rifle or hatchet, on any ground the sun shines on, I will meet him. The Weasel is a fool. Does he think that Red Hatchet is one as well?"

"Be that as it may," said the young soldier. "You have good reason to look well to this Huron. He is active, vindictive to the last degree, and he hates you now with a wounded panther's fierceness."

"Red Hatchet would have his hate rather than his love," replied the Onondaga, throwing out his broad chest. "Let him beware of the Onondaga. I make no promises, but if he comes in my way again, let him chant his death-song. Come, let us follow them, and see what they mean to do."

The country in which this event occurred was that section

north of the Mohawk, on the well-trodden war-trail from Schenectady to Oswego. The point was not far from Trenton, among the limestone hills which abound near Canada Creek. The companion of Red Hatchet was an ensign in Putnam's troop of Forest Rangers, who had been sent by his commander with a message to Colonel Bradstreet, then about moving for an attack upon Frontenac. For companion in his dangerous mission he had chosen Red Hatchet, as the one best fitted to bear the fatigue and meet the dangers of the perilous trail. The young ensign's name was John Norton.

They made ready their weapons, assured themselves that the water had not injured their ammunition, and set forth upon the Huron's trail. It led them in the way they wished to go, and brought them to Canada Creek, a swift mountain torrent, whose black waters leap over a succession of cascades at Trenton, among the most beautiful in the world. It was not by any means an inviting place to cross, but they were used to perils of this sort. Searching along the shore, they found logs large enough to bear their rifles and ammunition, and pushed out into the rapid stream. The current swept them down, but by dint of iron muscles they landed in safety upon the other shore, when they sunk down, panting for breath. It was a work which would have severely tried the most enduring frame.

"Ugh!" said Red Hatchet. "Hard work, Jack. Glad we got over safe. The falls are half a mile below and they are mighty. The great Manitou, in his anger at the rocks, which barred the passage of his river, rent these rocks that his river could pass through."

"How those vagabonds stared when you shouted at them from your hiding-place to-day. That is a wonderful retreat, equal to the one you showed me on Lake Ontario, at Oswego, where you went under the rock."

"Red Hatchet knows many such places," replied the Indian. "This land is full of them. It is a beautiful country. The Great Spirit gave the Mohawks a special land to live in. It is sad that the Indian must fade away before the face of the white men, but it is so. Let the Indians learn from the stranger, and become, like them, great in peace as well as war."

"In the mean time let us make the most of the day. The Hurons are swift of foot, and while we dally they may be doing some mischief."

Red Hatchet said no more but set out at a pace which made the young man step out freely. The Hurons had taken no pains to cover their way, beyond the ordinary precaution of walking in single file, to conceal their numbers. The trail was quite fresh, and was easily followed. The little band evidently had no fear of being pursued. Their path led through a country intersected by many mountain streams, and by ranges of rocky hills. Here and there was passed a small lake, shining in the sun, and reflecting the rays of the orb of day. The surface of these beautiful sheets of water were dotted by large flocks of aquatic birds, which had not yet learned to fear the approach of man. Ducks, geese and swans floated in the limpid water. Heron and snipe lurked in the reeds along the banks, and the wood-grouse started up from the cover at their very feet. The Indian looked with a smile at the abundant supply of game, followed by the sad look which always came to his face at the thought of the fate which was coming fast upon his race.

"Have you any idea what the Hurons are after, Red Hatchet?" asked young Norton.

"You heard him say he would meet the Oneidas. After that, mischief! The heart of the Weasel is a mine of evil. He loves to do wrong. He will strike at some white man to-night."

"We must stop that, if possible," said Norton. "My God, what if they should attack the house of Captain Hubbard?"

"Perhaps. The captain is a good man. All good Indians love him; all bad men hate him. His house is on the trail."

"Then we must apprise him of his danger."

"Good. But we have yet far to go. Let us follow the Weasel until he meets the Oneidas, and hear what they say."

They addressed themselves to the trail before them. Little was said, as all day long they tramped along the difficult way.

CHAPTER III.

FLOY.

ABOUT a mile from the point where Wood Creek empties into Oneida lake, a gentleman named Hubbard had built a house, and cleared a piece of land. He had been a captain in the English army, but had sold out three years before and established himself in this beautiful region, not far from the spot where the village of Oneida now stands. He had brought with him his wife and daughter, and a son about nineteen years of age. Fluorney Hubbard—called Floy by her friends—was a year or so younger than her brother. She was famed for her beauty and accomplishments, in every post from Oswego to Albany. Besides being well educated—as education ran in those days—she had accomplishments better appreciated on the frontier than book knowledge. She could row a boat as well as her brother, bring down a squirrel with a rifle, and cook venison to a charm! These were not minor qualifications in the eyes of the young men who stopped at her father's house. Being the “carrying-place” between Oneida lake and Three Rivers, they had many visitors. Indeed, some of the youngsters might possibly have turned aside to have a chat with pretty Floy, when they had no good reason for such a call.

Oneida lake was at rest. Not a breath of air stirred its placid surface. No sound broke the silence but the splash of the diver, or of the fish leaping out of the tranquil water. The entrance to Wood Creek was overhung by bushes, which nearly met in the center of the channel. All at once the stillness was broken by a clear voice, singing a merry tune, and a light boat shot out of the narrow entrance, propelled by a single rower, a young girl in the flush of her youth and beauty. She was not dressed according to the then conventional or town mode. Her robe was a trifle too short for that, but as it displayed a neat foot and ankle, the most grouty old grumbler must have forgiven her. Her hair, unconfined

in any way, was suffered to float in golden-brown masses about her shoulders. Her eyes sparkled with life, and her cheek showed the flush of vigorous health. A small rifle lay in the boat in front of her, flanked by a powder-horn and shot-pouch. This was Floy Hubbard, the beauty of the lake.

The boat spun along over the calm surface at a good speed, as she trilled that quaint old song. She was happy. The birds sung about her, the leaves were green, every thing was beautiful, and happy Floy was even more happy than usual. The head of the boat was directed toward a point half a mile away. In a few moments it struck the beach, and stepping out, she drew the little craft high up on the sandy shore, and called out in her sweet, clear voice :

“Here, Bruno! Come!”

The bushes cracked as a heavy body sprung through them, and a mastiff of wonderful size leaped out and fawned upon her.

“Down, Bruno; down, boy! There, there. I am happy to-day. Happier than I ever was in England. I wonder Charlie does not come. It is time.”

As she spoke, the dog, who had lain down at her feet, suddenly uttered a low, sullen growl.

“Be quiet, Bruno! What do you mean, sir? How dare you growl at your master?”

The dog still kept up the ominous sound and did not cease when a man stepped suddenly out of a narrow path which led along the lake from the east, and confronted her. He was a hard-featured, stern-looking person of about forty years of age, dressed in the garb of a gentleman of the day, but with such consummate tact that it was impossible to guess at his nation. He had an iron frame, a cold, gray eye, and altogether a devil-may-care expression, far from agreeable. Seeing the girl, he came forward quickly.

“Keep your dog quiet, miss,” he said, politely. “I should be sorry to hurt him. He is a strong brute, but a noble one.”

“You have nothing to fear from him,” she replied. “I can control him.”

“It would be wonderful if you could not,” he said, with a bold glance of admiration which made her angry. “I did

not know that this region boasted ladies of your sort. You must excuse me if I am over bold, but men who for years have been barred from the society of cultivated and beautiful women, appreciate a meeting like this the more."

"Can I direct you as to your course?" she said, rather coldly.

"I am in search of the house of a man called Hubbard—Captain Walter Hubbard, if I have the name right."

"My father, sir."

"Ah! I am surprised as well as delighted. I did not know that he had a daughter. Permit me to introduce myself to your favorable notice. My name is Samuel Carrington, and I am an agent sent among the Iroquois. On my way to the Oneidas I made bold to stop and rest under your father's roof."

"All strangers are most welcome there," she said. "My father is a very Arab as far as hospitality goes."

"I hope he does not imitate his prototype in the final business, after leaving the tent," said Carrington, with a laugh. "There, excuse me. I seem destined to make you angry by every thing I say. Of course I could not be in earnest, for your father's hospitality is a proverb. Are you waiting for some one?"

"My brother. He is out fishing."

"Very good. Then, with your permission, I will wait with you. I do not think it safe to leave you here alone. A stray panther might pass by, and in spite of your guard, you would be in danger."

"I do not fear the panthers," she said, quietly, touching her rifle. "Between this and Bruno, I consider myself safe."

"You are not like most women I have met, if you can shoot with any degree of precision."

"But I can," she replied, a little piqued by the remark. "You shall see whether I can or not, when we get to the house. I can beat my brother, and he is an excellent shot."

"*Merci*," said the other. "I ought to have known better than to suppose you not accomplished in every thing."

"What word did you use?" she said. "Your pronounci-

tion is perfect. One might almost suppose you a Frenchman."

"Men in my position are forced to know all languages well," he replied, turning away his head. "Hark!"

The clear notes of a horn could be heard stealing along the surface of the lake from the east. Floy took up a small bugle of polished brass, which hung at her girdle, and sounded a call in answer.

"My brother," she said. "He will soon be here."

They waited ten minutes. At the end of that time a youngster in a hunting-garb of dark-green cloth, came out upon the point. He carried a heavy string of brook-trout, a fish known only to the mountain-streams of America. One glance at his face was sufficient to assure Carrington that they were brother and sister. He was a stalwart young fellow, as handsome for a man as she was for a woman."

"A stranger?" he said, dropping his fish. "May I ask your business?"

"I am traveling, and simply seek the shelter of a roof for the night," said Carrington. And then he repeated what he had already told Floy.

"You have said enough," the young man answered. "You will be welcome. Floy, you have said as much, I hope."

She nodded before replying. "I can not take you in my boat now, Charlie. As you want to leave your heavy 'dug-out' here, you must keep the shore with Bruno. I will row Mr. Carrington over."

"I can not permit that," replied the other. "Allow me to do the work."

"Not I," replied Floy. "No one can do my work except Fluorney Hubbard. Throw your fish into the boat, Charlie. No need for you to carry them any further. Take Bruno with you, and I will let father know you are coming."

She took her place with the sculls, and Carrington, after an ineffectual protest against allowing her to row, took a seat in the stern and watched the beautiful girl with deep interest. Certainly she could not have appeared to better advantage than at that moment. The red tint which exercise had brought to her cheek, her beaming eyes, the swaying figure,

and the grace which was so natural to her, seemed to enchant him. But, Floy Hubbard was accustomed to admiration, and, for a wonder, it did not make her vain.

"You are the Lady of the Lake," he said. "The Niaid of Oneida."

"A truce to gallant speeches, sir. Remember that I am only plain Floy Hubbard, a frontier girl, and unaccustomed to courtly speeches. They do not fit the place nor the object. Think rather of the beautiful scenery."

"It is beautiful," he said. "Have you lived here long?"

"Three years or more," she answered. "I did not like it at first, it was so lonely and wild; but now I would not change place with the Governor's lady. I am happier here than I ever was before."

"It must have been a change at first if you have lived in cities, as I am sure you have."

"It was a change. I felt it deeply for a while, but now I'm surprised how I ever lived in the murky atmosphere of London. Here we have room to breathe, and are not cramped by the conventionalities of society. Believe me, sir, I am far happier now than ever in my life."

As she said this, by a dextrous turn of the left-hand oar, the little boat shot into the creek, and sped on up the sluggish current. The banks were low, with a heavy growth of timber on either side. For some minutes these woods continued, and then they came out into the more open country, near the place where Captain Hubbard had built his house. It was one of those rude log structures then common along the frontier—built more for strength than beauty. It was surrounded by a stockade eighteen feet high, formed of poles set into the ground firmly, and fastened by long strips of ash, spiked to the inside. The crops were now far advanced, and every thing bade fair for the coming winter. Two stout negroes were working at the corn near the river. They showed their white teeth and bowed as their young mistress passed by.

Captain Hubbard came out to meet them, and welcomed the stranger cordially.

Carrington talked glibly of the prospect for a crop, the beautiful situation of the house, and his good-fortune in finding so hospitable a place to pass the night.

"It is always understood," said the captain, a noble-looking man, somewhat past the middle age, "that strangers are welcome here. I am glad you have paid my poor house the honor of a visit. Floy, go to Beck, and tell her of the arrival of Mr. Carrington. Pomp!"

One of the negroes laid down his hoe and came forward at the summons.

"These trout need cleaning, Pomp. Get them ready at once."

"Iss, massa," said Pompey. "Berry nice trout, too, dey is; de bestis we's had dis long time."

While Pompey was cleaning the fish, and Beck, his wife, assisted by Floy, prepared supper, the captain showed the visitor about the cabin. The stranger examined the preparations for defense minutely, and approved of them.

"You could stand quite a siege here, against any thing except artillery."

"So I think," said the captain. "What with my son, my two men and myself, it would take quite a number of Indians to force the place. Then my daughter can load, and, if necessary, fire a rifle, as well as any of us."

"The negroes do not amount to much in a fight."

"*Some* negroes do not. Mine are not of that sort. My man Pomp is as fearless a fellow as you would wish to see, and is an excellent shot, and I can say the same of his son. So that we number four able-bodied men here."

"I see. How are your preparations as to water?"

"I took care of that," said the captain. "See. I have dug a deep drain from the creek to the stockade, so that there is always a stream of water running through one corner. This is covered outside, and no one would notice it."

"Do you apprehend danger from the Indians now?" asked Carrington.

"I can hardly tell. The Indians are divided in their councils, as you doubtless know. Some are for the French, and some for us. I trust the Oneidas less than any other tribe, and they are nearest to us. There is a man among them whom I fear above all others, who has the reputation of having white blood in his veins. He is called the **Flying Cloud** by the Oneidas."

"Did you ever see him?" said Carrington, without raising his head.

"Only once, and then he was so painted and bedizened that it was impossible to say whether he had white blood in his veins or not."

"What was he like?"

"About your size, I think, and, like you, of muscular frame. I am not surprised that he has gained an ascendancy over the Indians. He looked like a man of power."

"I have never yet visited the Oneidas," said Carrington. "They always had a bad reputation, and I did not like to go among them."

"Doubtless. But here is my son coming in, and supper will soon be ready. We will talk more of this man."

When the meal was over they drew chairs outside the door and passed a pleasant evening. Carrington was a man of good information, and an adept at story-telling. There was something in his accent, slight though it was, which made the observing girl think him a foreigner. But, after all, it might be ascribed to his knowledge of so many tongues. They retired about ten o'clock, taking the usual precautions. The stranger was placed in a room in the upper part of the building, and the family soon was at rest, with the exception of Pomp, who was porter and guard during the night. He had a bunk which he drew just in front of the door, and though he lay down about twelve o'clock, he kept "one eye open," as he said.

It might have been two o'clock when the stout negro was aroused by a sound which alarmed him, because it was unusual. A slight, grating noise, like the passage of a file over iron. He rose and went to the door, and looked out into the stockaded inclosure. Nothing could be seen, and the sound had ceased. Satisfied that he had been dreaming, the negro went back to his bed. He had not been there long when the noise began again. He was wide awake now; and, fully satisfied that it could be no delusion, he rose again, but this time did not open the door, but peeped through the key-hole. By the dim light, he saw a human form bending near the great gate of the stockade, busily at work. The negro was naturally cunning, and brave as a lion. To open the door again

would startle the man, whoever it was, and he stole on tiptoe to the back-door of the house, and slipped out into the inclosure.

Peeping round the corner of the house, he saw that the man was sawing off the bars which fastened the gate, which were secured in their places by a padlock. The grating sound he had heard was the noise of the saw. The man kept busily at work, moistening the saw now and then with some substance which he poured from a bottle. Pomp made three rapid strides, and flung himself bodily upon the industrious night-worker. As we have said, the negro was very strong, but he found the man he had seized possessed power fully equal to his own. But the attack of the negro was a surprise, and the fellow was taken at a disadvantage. They were down together, rolling over and over upon the hard earthen floor of the stockade, the throat of the intruder compressed in the firm grip of the negro.

"Who dis?" hissed Pomp. "What you tryin' to do, eh? S'pose you gwine to saw off dem 'ar bars while Pomp Hubbard is 'round? You keep still, Massa Sawyer. You don' keep still I butt ye, an' what ye do ef I was to butt ye, eh? Dar, dar, chile. You no 'count now, fur I's got ye."

The man struggled desperately, and by a mighty effort freed his throat from the grasp of the black, and made an effort to rise. Seeing that he was likely to accomplish his purpose, Pomp bent his head, and dashed it into the face of his foe. No one who has not suffered from a blow of this kind has any idea how effectual a weapon of offense a Nubian head can be made. The skull of the stranger struck the wall of the stockade with a crash, and he lay stunned and senseless upon the earth. Pomp produced a long buck-skin cord and bound his hands and feet tightly. This done, he rose with a chuckle, and turned the face of his opponent to the light. It was Samuel Carrington! As he made the discovery he heard a low tap at the door.

Pomp started and ran to the gate. Peeping through a loop-hole made for that purpose, he saw Red Hatchet and Norton, both of whom he knew very well. He opened the gate hastily. The first act of Norton upon entering was to attempt to put up the bars. But, he found that Carrington's

work had been well done, for the first one broke in his hand.

"How is this, Pomp? Where are your bars? Don't you see that this is broken?"

"Dat critter dar sawed 'em off," said Pomp. "Why, Marse Jack, who'd 'a' thought to see you dis night? How is you, Red Hatchet? Mighty glad to see ye bof."

"No talk," said Red Hatchet, in his broken English. "Get bar; get 'em now; get 'em quick, 'fore Huron come!"

Pomp ran back to the house and returned immediately with two heavy pieces of iron, which were kept in the house for fear of accident. When these were set in their sockets and the key turned, Norton breathed more freely.

"Call up your master, Pomp," he said. "Do it with as little noise as possible. There is no need to frighten Miss Floy."

"Miss Floy she always hear ebbery noise," said Pomp. "She wake up *sure*. But, don' you be 'fraid for frighten *her*! She ain't easy scared, Miss Floy ain't! She mighty smart gal, for sure. I bring 'im out."

"Who is this?" said Norton, catching sight of the recumbent figure of Carrington. "As I live it is the fellow who met the Weasel in the woods to-day. Go quickly, Pomp; the Indians are close at hand."

CHAPTER IV.

ON GUARD.

CAPTAIN HUBBARD was down in a moment, followed immediately by his son. Neither of them wore any coat, and each held a long rifle in his hand. The captain shook hands with his young friend cordially, and greeted Red Hatchet pleasantly. But, there was no time for more than a hurried greeting. Pomp told his tale clearly, and showed the broken bars as an evidence of the truth of what he said.

"You have done well," said the captain; "I thank you,

Pomp. There is no telling what you may nave saved us from."

"Psho, now!" said Pomp, affecting to undervalue his work. "You snet up, Marse Walt. You s'pose I'se gwine to sit yer, an' let dat yaller-faced, no'-count, stealin', thievin', sawin' vagabone cut off dem bars?"

"The next question is, what was his motive?" said Captain Hubbard.

"I think I can supply that missing link," said Norton. "Red Hatchet and myself followed an Indian of the Huron tribe to the eastern shore of the lake. There he met this man, and they had a talk. It was agreed that he should go first, and get into the house. It appears that he was well posted in regard to the strength of the position. Doubtless he knew something of the padlock, or he would not have brought the saw. In ten minutes' time you would have either been murdered in your beds or led into a hopeless captivity. If I understood their conversation correctly, all of you were doomed to death except Miss Floy."

"Who takes my name in vain?" said the clear voice of the girl, at this moment. "Upon my word, Master Ensign Norton, you make little ceremony in entering people's houses!"

"Retire, Floy," said Captain Hubbard. "There is danger. You should not be here."

"If there is danger, then my place is here," said the maid, promptly. "I can not retire until I know what to expect. Now, Johnnie, *don't* keep me in suspense. Is it from Indians?"

"I am afraid so," said Norton, reluctantly. "Having said so much, let me beg you to retire, and leave the rest to us. Be sure of this, Miss Floy: whatever happens, we will fight to the last to protect you from harm. I am glad your mother is at Albany. Now, Pomp, bring out the rifles; and call up Sam. You have spare rifles, Charlie?"

"Three," replied Charlie Hubbard. "Are we likely to need them?"

"I am of that opinion," said the young ensign. "I should not fear the Weasel and his band in the least, for there are only six of them; but there are others."

"Of what tribe?"

"Oneidas," said Red Hatchet.

"Ha! *You* say so. Then it is true. Never mind that. We are six men, good and true, in a strong stockade, with plenty of ammunition, food and water, and we will make it troublesome for the scoundrels. They must win us ere they wear us."

Pomp returned immediately, bringing with him a large powder-horn and ball-pouch, which he laid down upon a wooden bench. The place was built for defense. At intervals of about four feet loopholes had been cut, which were covered by wooden slides, that could be raised or lowered at a second's notice. The rifles had scarcely been loaded, when they could hear the sound of gliding feet, stealing across the opening, and a dozen heavy bodies struck the door at once. Evidently they had depended upon Carrington to perform his part in sawing the bars, for a low yell of surprise broke from one of the number as he found the door firm. At the same moment a rifle cracked. It was the weapon of Red Hatchet which spoke, and an Indian who was standing a little way from the door dropped in his tracks. Surprised that they had found their destined victims on their guard, the Indians retreated, taking with them the body of their comrade. Two more were wounded before they had gained the shelter of the woods.

"Keep a good watch, my boys," said the captain, "while Jack Norton and myself examine this villain whom Pomp has taken. Raise him up, Pomp."

Pomp seized him by the shoulders, and, assisted by his son, dragged Carrington into the house and placed him in a sitting posture against the wall.

"Dar he is," said Pomp. "An' I ax you fa'r ef you don't t'ink you'self a putty specimen of a man, you low-lived truck. I'd jest like to butt him ag'in; butted he jaw in, anyway, and sarved him mighty right."

"I protest against this treatment," hissed Carrington. "It is not the usage a gentleman should receive."

"Now look yer, *you*," said Pomp, irefully. "You set you'self up to be a gen'l'man ag'in an' I'll bust you right in der jaw. I will now, an' mine I tell ye! You low-lived truck, what you doin' wid a saw ef you's a gen'l'man? De breed

ain't got so low dat dey have to stoop to use sech low-lived skunks as you to make gen'l'men ob."

"Be quiet, Pomp," said the captain. "And you, sir, instead of complaining of your treatment, give me some good reason why I should not take you out and shoot you."

"You dare not do that."

"Dare not? That is an odd word for a man in your position to use to one in mine. I tell you not to be sulky, or refuse to answer my questions. In the first place, who are you?"

"Samuel Carrington."

"That story won't do here. I want your real name; nothing less will satisfy me. Once for all I ask you to tell me."

"I have told you already."

"Very well. We will take it for granted that you have given your real name. Now, for your business. What did you come here to do?"

"I was passing peacefully on my errand," replied Carrington.

"Was it a part of your errand to saw off the bars of my gate?"

"I never did it. The black scoundrel lied. His oath would not be good in law."

"His word is sufficient here. Now what nonsense you are talking. The saw was there and none of us had ever seen it before. The broken bars testify against you, and my visitors overheard your compact with the Indians in the woods."

Carrington was silent, but a vindictive gleam shot from his cold eyes.

"Confess," said Hubbard. "Let us know who you are."

"Let it satisfy you that I came here to take you and failed I am in the service of France. This much I will own, and no more. Do with me as you will."

"We will make you our safeguard. I believe that the Indians care enough for you to be careful how they shoot, when you are in danger. We will parley with them, and let them understand that the moment they succeed in forcing their way over our stockade, you will be shot through the heart."

"You surely would not murder me."

"Call it murder if you like. Infamous wretch, what was your plan for us? You entered my house under the guise of friendship, and were kindly treated. You entered to betray us and but for the fidelity of yonder faithful slave, you would have succeeded. Pomp, get your rifle and sit beside this man. When you know that the Indians have fairly entered the stockade, shoot him dead."

"But, Marse Walt, I want to fight dem Injins," pleaded Pomp.

"You can do as good service here."

"No," said Floy, entering at this moment. "Give me a pistol, and let me do that work! I will not fail."

"I think she would do it," said Norton. "Here are my pistols, Floy, and I will give you the credit of knowing how to use them better than any woman in the country."

"A light charge is the best for these. They throw a trifle high when overloaded, if I remember right," said the maid, coolly.

"You know them, I see," said Norton. "Now, captain; now Pomp! Let us get to work. It is about time for these villains to recover from their first surprise in finding us on our guard, and pitch in. Keep your eye on the prisoner, Floy. If he moves hand or foot, give it to him."

They went out together. Miss Fluorney drew a chair to the window, and sat down where she could watch the movements of her friends, while at the same time keeping an eye upon her prisoner. She saw the negroes, under the direction of Jack Norton, building a sort of staging around the inside of the stockade, upon which to stand while fighting. Jack was everywhere, encouraging the others by his cheerful manner, and laughing as gayly as if he was preparing for a feast.

"How brave he is!" thought the young guard, with a little flutter at the heart. "I am sorry I have treated him badly at times."

"My dear Miss Hubbard," said Carrington, at this moment. "allow me to say a few words to you, if you please."

"Change the form of address. You are too affectionate by far."

"Miss Hubbard, then," said he. "You can't object to that.

What do you propose to do with those little toys you have lying on the window-sill?"

"The pistols?"

"Precisely."

"I mean to shoot you if you make any attempt to escape."

"How comical it is!" he said, forcing a laugh. "The idea of a weak girl taking the life of a man. It is really too ridiculous."

"You are not so complimentary as you were to-day," she said. "Make any attempt to escape and you will find me neither weak nor timid. I have said I would shoot you if you made any attempt to escape, and I intend to keep my word to the very letter."

"I am entirely innocent of any crime," he pleaded.

"Nonsense."

"What did you say?"

"I said 'nonsense.' There is really no use in wasting breath. Your conversation is odious to me. Pray be silent, and let me hear no more from you. I am acting under orders."

"Then listen to me. I have more power than you think. Set me at liberty, and I promise to go away and take the Indians with me, with the promise never to trouble you again. But, if you keep me, woe to you and all others in this house, for I will never rest until they are dead! Do you know what brought me here? I will tell you. It was your beauty."

"Be silent, sir! I will hear no more from you. As surely as you speak to me again, so surely will I call Pomp, who will find a way to stop your mouth."

Carrington became silent, but the malevolence of his face was terrible. His eyes seemed to dart forth living fires. But, he saw that the girl had fully made up her mind to shoot him if he made the least attempt to escape. There was nothing for it but patience. He worked his bound hands in their bonds to see if there was any chance of freeing them, but found that Pomp had tied him securely. In these troubled times short work was made of men who forced themselves into fortified places for wicked purposes. In the backwoods,

there was no time or disposition for tampering with an enemy. The law was cord or bullet. The prisoner remained quiet. Floy was looking out at the window. She saw that the attack was about to commence, and even as she looked, the rifles began to crack along the edge of the woods, and the balls pattered against the sides of the stockade. She became excited, and leaned out of the window. She saw that Jack had opened the slide of the loophole which he had in charge, and run out his rifle. He fired. Turning back to hand his rifle to Sam, who was loading for him and Charlie, he saw her.

"Back, Floy, back! Do not expose yourself unnecessarily."

"There is no danger here, Johnnie. Be careful of yourself."

The combat now became close. A line of riflemen had closed about the work, and were busy. By the number of rifles continually cracking, Jack Norton, being a military man, could make out that nearly a hundred men were in the force which assailed them.

"Those cursed Oneidas," he muttered, looking at Red Hatchet. "This is the end of all their protestations of love for the English."

"The Oneidas are dogs," said Red Hatchet. "They are snakes in the grass, which crawl and hiss. An Onondaga spits at them. A girl of my tribe would put them to flight. They fly from brave men like rabbits. We do not fear them, dogs that they are."

Though in such large numbers, the Indians hesitated long before making an assault upon the stockade in force. They had a wholesome dread of the guns of the white men, although they were not aware that Red Hatchet and Norton had joined themselves to the besieged. Carrington was well informed as to the number in the fort, and had told the Oneidas. The villain was in torment. He heard the crack of the fire-arms, the yells of rage, and the sturdy shouts of the besieged. In his excitement he started up to a sitting posture, to look from the window. The sharp click of a pistol-lock brought him to a halt, and he saw the muzzle of the threatening weapon turned full upon him.

"You—you surely would not shoot me?" he gasped.

"Lie down!" was the reply, delivered in a tone of concentrated meaning. "Do it before I count three!"

Carrington did not wait for her to count. He saw by her face that she would not hesitate, and dropped into his old position, muttering curses, "not loud, but deep." She smiled and laid the pistol upon the window-sill again.

"Let me speak to you again," he said. "I don't ask much, but it is killing me to lie here. I want to sit by the window. Keep your pistol at my ear, if you like, but let me see how the fight goes on."

"Of what use would that be to you?"

"I am a fighting man myself, and love the roar of combat. It heats my blood. Come; be complaisant, if you will be so kind. Let me have a stool at yonder window."

"Will you give your parole of honor not to attempt escape?"

"Yes."

"Very good. I will agree to it. But you are not to turn your head. Remember, if you do that without first speaking to me, you are a dead man."

"What a cruel lady you are," he said. "I did not know that a lady could do so great a wrong."

"Be silent. There is your stool. Get to it as well as you can"

"Will you not release my feet?" he pleaded.

"No, sir!"

He rolled himself to the stool, and, by a powerful muscular effort, raised himself to a seat upon it. He was just in time, for at that moment a terrific yell announced that the attack had commenced in good earnest.

CHAPTER V.

STROKE AND COUNTERSTROKE.

GOADED by the taunts of the Weasel, the Oneidas had determined to risk an assault. It was now nearly day and the light was beginning to show itself, though it was yet dark enough to hide the movements of the savages in the edge of the woods. They came on in the manner peculiar to the Indians, crawling like snakes along the ground, until they reached the edge of the line of light cast by the tripods which the captain had set up within the works. These were iron receptacles filled with knots of "fat" pine, which, when lighted and raised upon tripods higher than the stockade, threw a lurid glare upon the earth for forty yards from the stockade. The defenders caught glimpses of many figures upon the verge of the circle of light, and then the rush came. A hundred wild figures darted at the stockade together, and were met by the deadly rifles of the besieged. Some of them fell, stark and stiff, while others, sorely wounded, limped away into the shelter of the forest. The war-cry of Red Hatchet rung loud and high in answer to the yells of the enemy. They reached the stockade, and some of them found shelter below.

"Pomp," shouted the captain, "speak to Beck and tell her to open the coppers. We will give these knaves a dose they did not bargain for."

Pomp ran into the house and returned in a moment bearing in each hand a heavy kettle, each one of which was full of steaming water. He ran up a ladder like a cat, with one of these in one hand and a dipper in the other. One dark arm was stretched over the stockade and the water streamed down. Screams of agony followed, and three Indians darted frantically across the open space. It was evident that hot water, as applied externally, was not to their taste. Pomp dashed down dippers full as fast as he could, while Sam did the same at another corner. A chorus of angry yells followed this strange mode of defense.

"Do you call *that* fair fighting," groaned Carrington. "Gentlemen do not make use of such weapons."

"I reply by two old saws, both applicable to the case," said Floy. "One is, 'All's fair in war,' and the other, 'Fight the adversary with fire.' Do not talk nonsense, sir. We must use any means for beating these bloody villains."

The assault with hot water was more than the Oneidas could bear, and they fled to the shelter of the woods again, with the exception of three or four determined warriors, who remained and dodged the descending water as best they could. Presently the captain called Sam down, and the hidden men were left in peace. One of these was the Weasel, and he resolved upon a new plan.

He looked up at the stockade. It was too high to scale, that was certain. He crept cautiously around to the rear of the block, where he thought the guards would not be so strong. He found there a pole lying upon the ground. To plant this against the side of the pickets, and go up like a cat, was the work of a moment. By standing on the top he could look into the inclosure. He saw that the defenders were grouped together upon the other side of the work, talking earnestly. Throwing himself over the pickets, he dropped to the earth, and at once buried himself in the shadow of the building. For the present he was safe, but he was in the den of the lion. If found, he knew that his fate would be sudden and sure. There was nothing for him but death. The Weasel was active and brave as a lion, in spite of his diminutive frame. He had shown that in his fight with Red Hatchet. This was a position which gratified him, in which his native subtlety could be brought into play. He lay silent for a moment, and then approached the window of the kitchen. Peeping cautiously in, he saw but one person there. This was Beck, or Rebecca, the wife of Pomp, who was heating more water in a pair of large coppers. The Weasel set his teeth hard, for he had taken his full share of the boiling fluid.

His first thought was to slip in and kill the negress. Then he remembered that some one would probably enter the room soon for more water, and finding Beck slain, would know that he was in the house. He found the back door of the building

ajar, and stepped in. He wished to find Carrington, and set him at liberty, for he suspected that his accomplice had fallen into the hands of the enemy.

He crept through the house in that silent, cat-like manner at which none but an Indian can hope to arrive. The door of the room in which they had left Carrington was open, and he peeped in and saw the object of his search. As he did so, a look of unutterable rage passed over his countenance.

He saw Carrington sitting on the stool, apparently at his ease, for, in the gloom of the room he could not see that he was bound, and began to think that his confederate had betrayed them. His hand gripped the hilt of his hatchet convulsively, and a malicious grin distorted his face. If Carrington had betrayed him, at least there was an opportunity for vengeance on him, and the Weasel resolved, at whatever peril to himself, to take his life.

Floy had no light except that thrown by the tripod in front of the house. If she could have known that that fierce eye was upon her, and the hideous face, made more ghastly by the war-paint, was looking in at the open door, it might have startled her, but not subdued her native courage. She had just leaned from the window to speak with Jack, who had approached below, when the Weasel took the opportunity to slip in, and throw himself down in one corner, near Carrington.

"You have beaten them off, I hope," said Floy. "What a terrible noise they make."

"More smoke than fire," said Norton. "They were considerably taken aback by the water. I hope the Weasel got his share."

"Who is the Weasel?"

"Did I not tell you? A Huron, with whom Red Hatchet had a little misunderstanding by the falls on Canada Creek. The chief threw him down the rocks at least twenty-five feet, and any well-constituted Indian ought to have died. But, this Weasel is too obstinate to die like a Christian. As it was, his face was smashed to a pumice."

"The Weasel will pay you for that some day," said Carrington.

"I do not fear him, and I am certain that my friend Red

Hatchet does not. You choose strange ~~companions~~ when you make friends with a bloody wretch like the Weasel."

The Indian, lying in the darkness with his fiery eyes blazing at the group at the window, had it in his heart to spring up, and throw himself upon the speaker, hatchet in hand. But, his habit of self-control enabled him to wait for the answer of Carrington.

"No matter; you choose to make friends with one Indian, I choose to do the same with another. I am your prisoner, and it is not manly to talk in that way to me."

"Perhaps you are right," said Jack. "But I hope to see the time when your friend will dangle at the end of a long rope, between heaven and earth. How dare you compare an Indian like Red Hatchet with a bloody thief like the Weasel? You had better look to yourself, for I assure you that you are by no means safe. We may be tempted to make a spectacle of you for your friends outside to gaze at."

"There, there, Johnnie; that will do. Remember that he is a prisoner. Go away at once, and try to take care of yourself. I fear you will be too rash."

"There is little danger connected with the defense of a place like this," said the young man. "Do you ask me to take care of myself for *your* sake?"

"Mine? Certainly; and for the sake of every one here. Don't encroach, now, after that speech; but go away at once."

The last two sentences were delivered in so low a tone that Carrington could not hear them. Indeed, he was busy in another direction. Feeling a light touch on his foot, he looked down, and to his surprise, saw the Weasel looking up at him from his mutilated visage. The Indian merely wished to apprise him of his presence, for, having done so, he rolled himself into his corner again, and lay quiet. But, even in that moment, he had cut the thongs which bound the feet of his friend. Carrington was an acute man, and kept his legs in the same position as before, and not by word or sign indicated that there had been any change in the position of affairs. But, his heart was bounding with hope so loudly that it seemed to him they must hear it. He had seen enough in the words and actions of Jack Norton and Floy to satisfy

himself that they were lovers, and he registered a vow in his black heart to separate them, even by death.

Norton went away, and Carrington kept quiet, satisfied to leave matters in the hands of the Indian. After a little he again opened a conversation with her, more to draw her attention from the Weasel than any thing else.

"That young man has a very good opinion of himself," he said.

"Very likely," said Floy, coldly. "I am not at all surprised that you do not waste any affection upon him."

"You seemed to take it coolly when he talked of hanging me."

"Why not? You have entered this house as a spy, and they could make you suffer the penalty."

"They will never have that pleasure," replied Carrington.

A black ball had coiled itself up immediately behind his chair. It was the Weasel, preparing to dart upon his prey. Carrington knew he was there, and signaled him to cut the cord upon his hands. He did so at once.

"You may think yourself safe, but I give you my word that if your men attack us again, they will hang you over the stockade."

"Is it possible? Suppose I should turn the tables on them and escape? After this declaration of yours, what would hinder me from taking the life of every one in the stockade, when it fell into my hands? You teach me a lesson, and it will go hard but I shall profit by the example you set me."

Floy cocked the pistol again, and turned toward him, her eyes flashing. He was cowed by the action, and had sufficient presence of mind to keep his hands behind him until she again laid the pistol down. He then laughed a little at the demonstration.

"What a little spitfire you are, Miss Fluorney. You turn upon me like a serpent. *I might* escape, you know. *Ciel!* more wonderful things than that have happened! For instance—I have you!"

As he spoke, he suddenly threw one arm about her, and pressed his disengaged hand heavily upon her mouth, stifling the scream which was rising to her lips. The Weasel seized her by the shoulder, and held his knife at her breast. She

knew that the least sound was certain death, and remained quiet, returning the triumphant smile of Carrington by a look of scorn.

"You stir, me kill," muttered the Weasel. "You speak, me kill an' scalp!"

Floy turned pale, but maintained her self-possession. She knew that she was in deadly peril. She saw Carrington hastily knot a handkerchief about the blade of a dagger, and knew that she was to be silenced, and made no opposition when the silver hilt was thrust into her mouth, and the handkerchief tied at the back of her head.

"Now, not a moment is to be lost," said Carrington. "We must escape."

"Wait," said the Indian, in his short, terse style. "See; Weasel fool white man."

He lifted Floy to the chair which she had occupied, and bound her in that position so that she could not fall out. "Stay here; keep good watch," he said. "White man see, think all right. Now come."

Carrington removed his shoes, and snatching up the pistols which had kept him quiet so long, followed the Indian out of the house. Fortunately for them, the Indians outside began a new assault at this moment, which it required all the skill of the defenders to repel. They had provided themselves with long poles, from which they had lopped the branches in such a way as to leave convenient holds for the hands and feet. Another party had cut down a small tree, to break down the gate. The savages, stimulated by the loss of the Weasel and Carrington, had been worked to a pitch of frenzied rage, and advanced under the fire of the rifles of the besieged. While some of the party assailed the work on every side twelve stalwart warriors lifted the battering-ram and rushed at the gate. The defenders saw their peril, and ran to their various posts. The Weasel and Carrington had just raised a ladder to get out of the inclosure. The white man had gained the top, and the Weasel had set his foot upon the lower round, when Pomp came round the corner of the house at full speed. He uttered a wild cry of mingled rage and fear as he saw them about to escape, and sprung forward. Carrington leveled a pistol and fired, while the Weasel turned like a wolf at bay

Pomp received the bullet in his shoulder and staggered. The white villain, leaving his red friend at the mercy of his enemies, dropped from the ladder and hid himself below the wall outside. The Weasel was half way up the ladder when Pomp reached it, closely followed by Red Hatchet. There was no time to follow, and seizing the ladder in his powerful hands, the negro swung it away from the wall and dashed it to the ground. The Weasel saw Red Hatchet hurrying forward, and knew that only one thing could save him. Turning upon the ladder like a cat, he saved himself from being crushed in the fall, and making an agile spring, eluded the rush of Red Hatchet, and, darting past him, sprung through the latticed window at a bound. A gleam of light seemed to follow him. This was the hatchet of the Onondaga, thrown with all his force and skill. But, the Weasel was on the leap when it was thrown, and it whizzed by in dangerous proximity to his head, without injuring him in the least.

Red Hatchet did not hesitate. Where the Weasel had gone he could go, and the broken lattice had not ceased to quiver when he passed through, close upon the heels of his enemy. But the Weasel had time to close and bolt the door in his face. Snatching Floy in his arms, he run up the stairs to the roof of the block—for the house was built with a flat roof—and closed the scuttle behind him. Norton and the rest, looking up, uttered a cry of horror. There he stood on the verge of the parapet, holding the insensible body of Floy in his arms, and raising a sharp knife above her heart.

"Listen to my words, white men and black, and you, red dog of an Onondaga, who have stolen the name of Red Hatchet. I am the Weasel of the Hurons, and I laugh at you all. The White Lily is in my arms. Would you kill her? Then lift a hand against *me*!"

"Oh, red villain," cried the agonized father. "Give me back my daughter!"

"Let the gray-haired man sing her death-song, unless he says, 'the Weasel shall go free.' Ah-ha! Hark to the war-cry of the brave Oneidas! They are at your gates. Beat them first, and then speak to me!"

Carrington was urging on the Oneidas to the assault. They could hear his voice high above the rest, enjoining them, by

every epithet, to press on to victory. The defenders fought gallantly. No sooner was a ladder raised, than some one flung it down. Jack Norton and Red Hatchet, who were defending this portion of the work, kept their rifles busy upon the scoundrels who were leveling the battering-ram against the gate, which was trembling under their repeated blows. But, these two deadly rifles, loaded quickly by Pomp, whose wound did not keep him from doing service in this good work, rapidly thinned their ranks. The determined resistance began to tell upon the assailants, who had not counted upon such stubborn work. One by one the Oneidas went down under the repeated shots of Norton and Red Hatchet, while the Weasel, unable to help his friends, stood erect upon the roof of the house, holding Floy in a strong grasp. He saw with unavailing rage the efforts of his comrades, and lamented his inability to give them any aid. As the day broke, they fled to cover again, and left their dead and wounded under the wall.

It was the Weasel's turn now. If they had beaten the Oneidas, he had a hold upon them which they could not surmount. His grim face lighted up at the thought, and he clasped his victim tighter, holding her before him as a cover.

"What says the Weasel now?" said Norton, in the Huron tongue. "Will he give up the lady and submit?"

"White man, no!" replied the Weasel. "It is not for you to tell me what I must do. It is rather for you to listen to me. Hearken then to the words of a chief, men of the white nation and black, and you, Red Hatchet, whom I hate. There is but one way. Let me go out in peace, bearing the lady. When I am safe in the woods, I will let her go free. If you refuse, I will kill her. Choose, and do it quickly."

And he sat down upon the flat roof, patiently waiting for

CHAPTER VI.

THE LOST SCALP.

THEY grouped together outside the house and began to consult. A settled sadness fell upon all.

"I can not think what advice to give," said the young ensign. "I do not think he will deal fairly by us, and allow her to return. But, this fiend will surely destroy her if we attempt to take her from him. We can not starve him out, for she would be forced to take her share of the suffering. I am afraid the villain has us in his power."

"It looks so," said Hubbard, sadly. "What do you think, Red Hatchet? You are the coolest among us."

"The Weasel must have his way," said the Onondaga. "His heart is black as the mud of the Mohawk. He would slay the Pale Lily before our eyes and cast her bleeding body among us. There is but one way to save her, and that is open. Let him take her out into the forest, and then trust to Red Hatchet to save her from him."

"You do not think the Weasel would keep his word and send her back?"

"Not he! The dog is a liar, and *could* not tell the truth. The Pale Lily must go out among them, and Red Hatchet must save her."

Norton turned again to the Weasel. "We are agreed," he said. "You may keep her for a safeguard, and send her back to us when you get to the forest."

The Weasel grinned satirically. He knew well that they were far from believing that he intended to send her back.

"Bring the ladder," he said. "Then stand aside, and remember the first sound or motion is a knife in the heart of the Pale Lily."

They stood aside in unutterable sorrow, as soon as the ladder was placed, and saw him come down with cat-like agility, eyeing them furtively. The Onondaga had disappeared, and the Weasel noticed it and stopped short.

"Where is Red Hatchet?" he cried, raising his knife.
"Let him come forth, or the Pale Lily dies by the knife."

"There he is," said Norton, pointing into the window.
"You are in no danger from him."

The Weasel caught a glimpse of a feathered head-dress at the window of the house and went on slowly, signing to the others to keep far off by a motion of his armed hand. They saw no hope. Their darling must go out into the forest, and depend upon them for deliverance.

"Good-by, dear Floy," said Norton. "I will rescue you or lose my life in the attempt. Keep up a good heart."

She could not answer, for the gag was still in her mouth. The Weasel had forgotten it in his haste. He cut the hand-kerchief with his knife and thrust the dagger into his belt.

"Do not think I shall be downhearted," she said. "Though I think it would be better to die now than to go out with this ruffian."

"Do not say so, dear sister," said Charlie Hubbard. "You may depend upon us."

The Weasel had turned his back to them, and keeping her before him as a shield, was backing slowly out of the inclosure, with that grin of triumphant malice still upon his face. They had given her up for lost, when a sudden, rushing sound was heard, and they saw the Weasel release his hold upon Floy, and stagger to the earth. Floy darted back with a cry of joy, and was received in the arms of her father. The next moment Red Hatchet entered, bearing in his arms the insensible body of the Weasel. The heavy red mark upon his skull told where the hatchet had fallen. The Onondaga had kept his word, and Floy Hubbard was saved!

When he had showed himself at the window he had waited for the Weasel to turn his face again to the rest of the party. Then, darting out of the house, he ran up the ladder by which Carrington had escaped, and which was hidden from the view of those in front of the house, and dropped to the ground. Once there, he ran round to the front, and waited for the coming of the Weasel. He felt certain that the Huron would turn his back to the gate in passing out, in order to watch his enemies. It turned out as he had hoped, and the blow was dealt before the Weasel had any idea of his danger.

Charlie and Jack each seized a hand of the chief and shook it heartily, thanking him from the bottom of their hearts.

"Stop," said the chief, proudly. "A warrior of the Onondaga nation must always do his duty. He can never be a coward and let a flower like the Pale Lily be carried away by a dog of the Hurons. As the panther and bear hate each other, so is the hate of all true warriors to the Hurons. They are snakes which crawl in the grass and hiss at those who pass by. Let me do my duty, and do not speak of it as if I had done some great deed. See; the Weasel lies dead at my feet. He was proud of his quickness and his cunning, but it has come to nothing. Now he lies there, and so let all die who are the children of evil."

Floy came to Red Hatchet and took his hand, and would have thanked him, but he would not allow it.

"No, no, daughter of the good heart. It is not just that a chief should hear others speak of his deeds. It was a pleasure for Red Hatchet to help the Lily of Oneida. He has seen that her hand is soft when it touches those who are sick, and that her voice is gentle as that of a little child when she speaks to those who love her. Red Hatchet has given a good father his good daughter again, and his heart is light because they are glad."

They looked down upon the Weasel, whose body was still at the feet of the Onandaga. Pomp lifted his hand, and it fell heavily down, like a clod. It seemed that the Huron had done his last of evil upon earth.

"What shall we do with his body?" said Norton. "Why did you bring it here, chief?"

"I must have his scalp to hang in my lodge," said Red Hatchet.

"How can you, Red Hatchet," said Floy, softly; "you, so kind to your friends, take a delight in mutilating the bodies of your enemies? I wish you would not do it."

"See," said the chief, extending his hand in an argumentative manner. "Your white chiefs go out to battle, and the warriors carry flags. King George's men have a red cross on their ensign. They fight against the banner which carries the ~~ilies~~ of France, and when they have taken it, and slain many

A DEAD MAN COME TO LIFE.

of the enemy, they are very proud. They have been taught that it is noble to take these flags from the enemy. The Indian has his teachers as well, and they have told him that the warrior who takes the most scalps from the enemy, is the bravest. Red Hatchet never hung one in his wigwam which he did not take himself. The Pale Lily does not like to look on and see scalps taken. She has been taught so. An Indian woman is glad when she sees a scalp in the hands of her friends. Good. I will take the Weasel outside and take his scalp."

He lifted the body of the Weasel in his arms and carried it out again, and dropping it, found that he had forgotten his knife. He turned back for it, and came out quickly, just in time to see the supposed dead man running for the woods, at his best speed. Red Hatchet uttered a cry of rage, and started to follow, but Norton caught him by the wrist and dragged him back.

"Are you going mad, Red Hatchet?" he demanded, somewhat angrily.

The Onondaga's face was a study then. Rage, regret, baffled purpose, a lost prize, all struggled for expression, but he was silent.

"Never mind it, Red Hatchet," said Hubbard. "I wish you had finished the fellow. It would have been better for all concerned, but what is done can not be changed. He is gone, but I have my daughter back, and that is the main thing. By the way, Floy, you were gagged. Who did that?"

"Carrington."

"For that cowardly act I will call him to a strict account. I wonder who the rascal can be? He certainly is in league with the Oneidas," said Norton.

"We know that he is an enemy, and that ought to satisfy us."

"I will teach him not to insult a lady in that way," muttered Jack.

"Do him justice, Johnnie," said Floy. "There I sat all through the attack, with a pistol at his head, threatening him with instant death. When he got a little power he retaliated. It is no more than fair. I will go into the house and see that you get some breakfast. I am sure you all deserve the best I can give you."

CHAPTER VII

THE FLYING CLOUD.

By the aid of Beck a meal was prepared hastily, and, hav-
ing Pomp and Sam on the watch, the defenders of the block
came in, and ate with the appetites of men who had been
fighting all night. When they were satisfied, they went out
again, and the negroes came in to partake of the good things
set before them, to which they did ample justice. By that
time it was nearly eight o'clock, and Pomp came to his mas-
ter to say that a white flag was waving on the edge of the
woods.

"Fore de Lord, massa, I war gwine to shoot him, but de
nasty critter he kept out ob sight."

"You must never fire at a white flag, Pomp. That is
against the rules of warfare."

"Don' care a cuss for de rules ob wa', dat's a fac'! I's not
a white man. You s'pose we 'uns is gwine to git any massy
if dey 'uns gits we? No, sar! Dey jess truss ebery chicken
ob us up to a tree an' roast us. Dat's w'at dey's a-gwine to
do. *Dey* won't fight fa'r, Lord bless your good h'art."

"No matter. If they are savages it is no good reason for
us to be like them."

"Jus' so, marse. I was a-t'inkin' ob dat, myself. Say de
word, an' I goes an' brings dat white flag feller in by de scruff
ob de neck. I will do dat, shuah. Shall I go now, Marse
Walt?"

"No. Stay where you are. I will answer the flag."

He took a handkerchief to the gate of the stockade and
waved it. The signal was followed by the appearance of two
men at the edge of the woods. One of these was the Weasel,
and the other an Indian they had never seen. He was a tall,
wiry man in the full dress of an Oneida war-chief, with a
wampum belt wrapped about his waist, and thrown over his
shoulder, dropping nearly to the earth from a knot at that
point. He wore a buckskin robe worked with quaint

devices, after the manner of the Indians, and bore upon his brow the feathers of a chief. He had left his weapons behind him, and merely held the flag as a safeguard, as if he knew its efficacy. His face was painted in a fantastic way, and his black hair hung upon his shoulders, waveless and unlustrous as Indian hair generally is. Red Hatchet uttered a low exclamation.

"Do you know him?" asked Norton.

"It is Flying Cloud, chief of the Oneidas. Beware of him. As the rattlesnake is deadly, so is he; as the panther is swift and fierce, so is he; as the buffalo is strong, so is he; as the fox is cunning, so is he! They say he has white blood in his veins, but, for my part, I know not," replied the Onondaga.

"You are sure of the man?"

"Have we not met in the councils of the nations? Cappen knows him, too,"

"Yes," said Hubbard, "and the lying knave promised to be true to the English when I saw him last. He has joined the Praying Indians since."

"Did you ever see him without his paint, captain?" asked Norton.

"No. He is in high repute among the Praying Oneidas. Here they come. Just see the diabolical grin upon the face of the Weasel! He owes you no good will, Red Hatchet. See that he does not do you a mischief."

Red Hatchet made a disdainful gesture.

The two chiefs were now at hand, and came up boldly. Norton, Red Hatchet, and the captain stepped out to meet them. The Oneida chief had paused, and was looking at the bodies lying about the stockade in evident sorrow. They numbered six of his bravest men.

"Ensign Norton will speak to you, and hear what you have to say, Flying Cloud," said Hubbard. "For my part, I find it difficult to respect the flag, and to keep my hands from my pistols."

"All men respect the flag," replied Flying Cloud, in the Oneida tongue. "Why will not Captain Hubbard speak to me himself?"

"I have not the temper. Say your say to the ensign, and be quick about it, for we have not much time to spare."

"The Oneidas are sad because the bodies of their brethren lie rotting under the summer sky. They wish to give them burial."

"Granted," said Norton. "You may send ten men and take them into the woods to bury them where you like. We do not want them here."

"Good," said the Oneida. "I am glad my brothers are so kind."

"Do not *brother* me, Indian! I have any thing but a brotherly feeling toward you just now, and all your dirty pack. As for the fellow who intruded himself here as a guest to betray the household, let him look to himself. I'll make every drop of his blood yet tingle like fire."

"Carrington would not fear a young man who talks so loud," replied Flying Cloud. "Say to me what you wish, and he shall hear it, for he is my friend. It is not for you to speak behind his back what you would not say to his face. He is a friend of the Oneida, the Huron and the French. He is the enemy of the English and all who are their friends, and will uphold the golden lilies at any price."

"No more words," said Norton. "I will meet this ruffian wherever he will, and whenever he will, and repay the insult he has offered my friends. Proceed at once to the duty before you, and let me hear what you have to say."

"The Oneidas are incensed against the white men," said the Flying Cloud. "They have slain our warriors, and their scalped bodies lie before us. Yet, though so deeply wronged, the Oneidas would still give you an opportunity to save your lives. You shall hear what we offer, and know how great at heart are the Oneidas, who learn to forgive and forget injuries, no matter how great. You shall give up the stockade and all it contains to us, the rifles, the powder and ball, and the food you have laid in for winter. You shall keep one rifle and two canoes, and may go to Oswego. The Oneidas will allow you to pass safely."

"Any thing else?" sneered Norton.

"There is one thing more. I have looked with favor upon the Pale Lily, and I find her very fair. She shall be the wife of a great chief. I will take her into my wigwam."

Norton, nearly frantic with rage, was about to throw himself upon the speaker, but the strong arm of Red Hatchet was about his waist, and held him back.

"Release me, Red Hatchet. By heaven I will hurt you if you do not mind."

"What will you do?" said Red Hatchet, coolly. "Listen to the words of the chief. You have seen the white flag fly and you know well that white men can do no wrong to the man who carries it in his hand."

"You heard that insult, and yet ask me to be calm!" shouted Norton. "Hear me, you red dog. Go back to your band and say that while a stick of this wall stands, or one of us is able to raise an arm, we will not suffer you to pollute it with your presence. Go; the flag protects you, when nothing else could, from my vengeance. Away, before I forget that you are under its folds!"

Flying Cloud listened to him coolly, with a sarcastic smile. "My young friend is very hot," he said. "See; there are times when a cloud rises in the sky, no larger than a blanket. It seems that no harm could come from a little cloud like that, but it spreads and spreads, until it covers the whole sky, and then the torrent comes down. Such a cloud has hung over the house of Hubbard, and he has not seen it, or has laughed at it. But now, his sky is covered and the rain of fire and lead is falling. Have a care that you are not overwhelmed! I do not fear the white men when they talk big words. The stockade must fall, and when it does—"

"What then?"

"Death!" replied the chief. "You have brought the evil home to yourselves."

With these words he turned and strode haughtily away, closely followed by the Weasel, who had not spoken a word, but had remained with his eyes fixed upon the face of Red Hatchet, as if he would impress every feature upon his memory. The Onondaga had stood up proudly, after his struggle with the young ensign, and returned his looks in like manner. The woods soon concealed the flag of truce; the party re-entered the work and again closed and barred the door. This done, they made new preparations for defense, for they feared the Flying Cloud. They had heard of him

often as a skillful and resolute warrior, who knew how to fight.

In about five minutes the ten Indians appeared and carried away their dead and wounded. Then, for the first time, the defenders of the fort found that the Onondaga had left them.

Red Hatchet felt that he had a duty to perform. Losing the scalp of the Weasel had stained his honor, and he felt as much bound to kill the Huron and gain the lost trophy as a white man would who had lost his banner in battle. While the rest were busy he had slipped out of the fort, climbed over the wall in the place where Carrington had escaped, and throwing himself upon the earth, glided unperceived by the Oneidas to the river, and concealed himself in the rushes upon the bank. Once there, he felt safe. If the Oneidas had not been occupied over their dead comrades he could not have done this unmolested. They had raised the death-cry above the slain, and were busy. The Onondaga had counted upon this. He could hear the wailing cries of the Oneidas, who were bearing their friends to a place of burial.

Red Hatchet had determined to be present at the service! When satisfied that they had passed down the creek toward its mouth, he relinquished his hold upon the rushes, and allowed himself to float downward, so keeping under cover that it was impossible for any one upon the bank to see him. Not a splash disturbed the placid stream. Upon the shore of the lake, a hundred yards below the mouth of the creek, was a piece of level ground, in the center of which grew three giant maples. A beautiful spot, where the grass formed a rich, green carpet, and the flowers grew thick and bright.

The chief kept on down-stream, until at a point directly opposite this spot. Here he was witness of a solemn and impressive ceremony. They had laid the dead in a row upon the earth, while a number of the warriors were digging the graves, and the rest, seated in a circle, kept up a low, mournful song, keeping time to the music by swaying their bodies to and fro. For half an hour this chant was continued, while the graves were preparing. The dirge was a strange, mournful one, and though without rythm, was made powerful by the manner of the singers.

“Hear us, Manitou,
Pity the warriors,
See how they bleed !
Dead by the Yengees hand,
The hated foe of the red-men !
Dig a deep grave in the meadow,
Bury them under the green trees ;
May the blue and white flowers wither,
Nor the grass come again,
Till we slay the slayers of our brothers, who have wronged us.
The hated foe of the red-men !
Dead, dead, dead !
Scalped and bloody they lie !
Who shall tell this in the village ?
Who shall atone for the widows ?
Who will take care of the children
When the father lies dead in the greenwood ?”

Here they rose and began to march about the grave, still keeping up the solemn chant. Three times they completed the circuit of the grave, and then two chiefs stepped forth and wrapped the bodies in their own blankets and laid them together in the shallow pit which had been dug. The grief of the whole party seemed intense. The long, low, tremulous wail was constantly rising on the clear air. From the place where the Onondaga lay he could see the whole ceremony, and though these men were his enemies he could not help feeling sympathy for them.

No earth was thrown upon the remains, but Flying Cloud rose, and in a low, sad voice, began to speak of the departed. When he had finished the Onondaga no longer wondered that he had power in the tribe.

“One morning I was in sorrow. My head was bent with grief. I looked at the sky, to see what was its sign. I observed in one place a dark cloud lifted above the trees ; and, looking steadfastly for its movement or disappearance, found myself mistaken, since it neither disappeared nor moved from the spot, as other clouds do. Seeing the same cloud successively every morning, I thought that the cloud hung over the Praying Oneidas, and over the head of my grandfather, the great chief. I went, steering my course by the cloud. I arrived at my grandfather’s door and found him in tears, disconsolate. He hung his head to hide the tears which ran

down his cheeks. Casting my eyes about for the cause of my grandfather's grief, I discovered an elevated spot of fresh earth, upon which no grass was seen growing; and here I discovered the cause of his grief. No wonder he so grieved, seeing in what a situation he was. Even I could not help weeping with my grandfather. I can not proceed for grief."

Here he seated himself for nearly twenty minutes and drew his blanket over his head as if in deep affliction. Then he rose again:

"I will tell you more of the vision. I said, 'Grandfather, lift up your head and hear what your grandchild says to you. I, having discovered the cause of your grief, it shall be done away. See, grandfather. I level the ground on yonder spot of yellow earth, and put leaves and brush thereon to make it invisible. I sow seeds on that spot, so that both grass and trees shall grow thereon. Grandfather!—the seed which is sown has already taken root; nay, the grass has already covered the ground, and the trees are growing. Now, my grandfather, the cause of your grief being removed, let me dry your tears. I wipe them from your eyes. I place your body, which by the weight of grief and a heavy heart, is leaning to one side, in its proper posture. Your eyes shall be henceforth clear, and your ears open as formerly. The work is now finished.' This was the vision which I saw."*

Here he paused for a moment, to allow the vision to have full force, and then began again, in a more excited tone:

"Brothers of the Praying Oneidas, you see before you an open grave. In this we must bury six of the wisest and best of the tribe. They fell fighting like men, and they will go to the happy hunting-ground. But, what is this I see? Three of them have lost their scalps. Where are they? They hang at the girdle of one who is a son of the Five Nations. What is this, when brothers fly at each other's throats?

"Something must be done, before the grass will grow upon this grave. We must take the Red Hatchet, and tear from his bosom the scalps of our brothers. You knew them all, and that they were noble men, worthy of the great tribe of the Oneidas. Red Hatchet must die, and with him all the white men.

* A veritable speech, delivered at the grave of a chief.

"Cover the dead braves with earth. The grass must not grow before we avenge them. Hasten, for my grief is great until I have taken vengeance on their slayers, and they can pass in happiness across the silent river."

They heaped earth upon the bodies of the slain, and again three times marched round the grave, calling upon their friends to wait until they had avenged them. Red Hatchet had quietly watched them from among the reeds, when all at once he felt something touch his shoulder, and turning his head, looked into the fiery eyes of the Weasel, who had come upon him from behind! Even in the midst of the solemn ceremony, in which he took very little interest because he was not of Oneida blood, the Huron had seen something in the motion of the rushes which he did not like. Leaving the circle when its course brought him on the side of the grave opposite the place where Red Hatchet lay concealed, he had crept into the bushes, and making a circuit, reached a small canoe which was moored upon the river-bank a short distance above the place where his enemy was hidden. Loosing the light craft, he suffered it to float down, with but little aid from the paddle, until it came to the place which had aroused the sagacious warrior's suspicions. There he saw the Onondaga, lying in the water, and coolly watching their proceedings.

Nothing which can be said would be adequate to describe the joy with which the Huron beheld his enemy. For a moment he hesitated whether to shoot him as he lay, or thrust a knife into his back. But, that would hardly have suited his vindictive nature. No, his enemy must know from whence the blow came. He gave a light stroke with the paddle and the bow of the canoe touched Red Hatchet on the shoulder.

There are moments in human life when the universe seems to come to an end at once. For a single moment Red Hatchet was stunned, bewildered by this sudden and unexpected visitation, and remained silent, looking into the blazing orbs of his enemy. This indecision was soon over. Seizing the canoe by the prow, he gave it a push which overturned it, and left the Weasel struggling in the stream. The next moment they were locked in a deadly grapple, in the sluggish water of the creek. Red Hatchet knew that, unless he

could shake off the Weasel in time to gain the opposite shore before the Oneidas reached him, he was doomed. But the Weasel clung to him with a tenacity which baffled his efforts, while his shrill cries guided the Oneidas to his rescue. Red Hatchet had fastened on his throat at last, and thrust him under water. But, his hands were gripped in the hunting-shirt of the Onondaga in such a way as to render it almost impossible to break his hold. Red Hatchet knew that only death would separate them. Yet he struggled with fierce energy. Disengaging one hand he dealt the Huron a crushing blow in the face which stunned him. Breaking from his grasp, the Onondaga turned his head toward the other shore, and had gained the mid-current when the Oneidas reached the bank. While one of them dragged the Weasel from the water, others plunged into the stream in search of the Onondaga, and a dozen shots were fired at him. At the first fire he sunk, and they saw him no more. Was it ended then? Had that great heart ceased to beat? A red stain was on the water where he went down, and they looked for the body to rise for half an hour. He did not come up, and Flying Cloud congratulated himself that one of his ablest enemies had been slain, and told the Weasel so when he came to his senses.

"Got his scalp?" said the Huron.

"No," replied Flying Cloud. "It is under the water with him."

The Weasel shook his head.

CHAPTER VIII.

A SAD HOUR.

THE chief ordered his men back to the grave, and they finished the burial of the dead. This done, they took their arms and returned to the vicinity of the stockade to take vengeance on the slayers.

Norton was much alarmed at the continued absence of his Indian friend. Noonday came, and Red Hatchet did not appear

The afternoon wore on, and still no signs of him. The Indians made no attack during the day, but confined themselves to occasional shots through the loopholes, in the hope of disabling some of the defenders. No one except Pomp had yet been injured, and his wound was doing well. The only fear which harassed Norton was that his friend had fallen by the hands of the Oneidas. He had heard the shots fired at the mouth of the creek, followed by the triumphant yells of the savages, and could think of nothing else to account for it. The noble Onondaga had paid the penalty of his rashness.

Night came on, and still no attack. They began to think that the enemy did not intend to try them again.

"Tell you what, Marse Walt, dey's skeered, dey is! Don' you tolle me dey ain't, 'cause I knows better, my own self. Dey's skeered orfully. Now you jest be sure ob dat. We gib 'em hot an' hot dat time, an' I s'pec's dey don' like it," said Pomp.

"You may be right, Pomp," said Captain Hubbard. "I must say it looks like it now."

"Dat's it, to be sure. We's fighted 'em too strong. Dey's a lot of sneakin', no'-count critters, jus' like dat fetched Carrington. 'Fo' de Lord, I wish I'd killed dat pizon sarpint. It would jus' sarbe him right. No gemman ebber tie a lady up de way he tie up our Miss Flo'."

"I will settle with him for that before I die," said Norton, savagely. "Floy, I am concerned about my friend. Take my word for it—and no man in this colony, Ralph Warren excepted, knows the chief better than I do—he has not his equal in the colony in devotion to the English interests. His bravery is something wonderful. Such a man as that is a credit to humanity itself. But, he is a savage, nevertheless, and the loss of the trophy he had fairly won from the Weasel, cut him to the heart. I am afraid the brave fellow has fallen."

"I wish he had not gone out," said Floy, uneasily. "Why did he not tell you?"

"Because he knew I would oppose it. Let me have a few words with you within the house."

They went in together, and sat down upon a low settle in one of the rooms.

"I wanted to speak to you now, Floy, because these are days of danger, and something might happen to me. It seems to me I could not die happy knowing that I had never told you what was in my heart. I love you, Floy. It was impossible to see you so much without submitting heart and soul to the sweet influences of love."

She was hanging her head now, and but that it was growing quite dark, he could have seen a roseate flush stealing over her lovely face. He continued, passionately:

"My love has been growing upon me for two years, and I do not know that I should have dared to speak to you now, but for this thing. We are in great danger, and something may happen to separate us. In this event, the knowledge that you cared for me would never leave me, in any after-pain."

She was silent still.

"If you do care for me," he said, "put your hand in mine. If not, withhold it. That will be enough."

She hesitated a moment and then gave him her hand. He pressed his lips to it after the courtly manner of the day.

"I will speak to your father to-night," he said. "My darling, you do not know the joy you give me. I—"

What he would have said was drowned in a wild cry, which could never be forgotten—the war-cry of the Oneidas! He saw a dozen dusky forms rise from the earth, and dart forward. The moment of deadly peril had come!

Thrown off their guard by the seeming apathy of the Indians, the defenders of the stockade had not watched as closely as they might have done under other circumstances. But, neither Flying Cloud nor the Weasel had given up the idea of taking the place. As soon as it was dark they had set to work, and, digging another trench in the soft soil, deeper than the one by which the water was conveyed into the block, they succeeded in draining this trench. The work was easy after that. The throat of this ditch was large enough for a man to crawl through on his hands and knees. The Weasel went first of all, and, raising his head through the opening within the work, saw that the defenders were taking their ease, not even dreaming of an assault. Touching the man behind him, he in turn gave the signal to the next, until the twenty

men in the ditch knew that they must follow their leader. The Weasel slipped out of the opening and dropped at once upon the earth in that dark corner. The fire in the brazier had not yet been lighted. In this manner he was followed by the entire party, until twenty men, armed with knife and hatchet, were lying beside the Weasel upon the earth.

He saw that Pomp was bringing an armful of pitch-pine to make the light in the brazier, and they dared not wait for that. The Huron, therefore, gave the signal which cut Jack Norton off in his love-making, and caused him to spring to his arms.

The surprise was complete, however. Pomp and Sam, Captain Hubbard and his son, were grouped together near the brazier, and in this open place were forced to receive the assault of the twenty warriors. Yet, in half a moment's time, three of the scoundrels had gone to judgment. One was brained by a blow from the iron-bound butt of Pomp's musket, another pierced by the sword of the captain, and a third fell by the hand of Charlie. The next moment Jack Norton came sweeping down and added his sword to the strength of the party. Another man went down.

"Fall back!" shouted the young ensign. "Into the house with you. We can give them a hearty welcome there. Charge once, and drive them back."

Unable to stand against the leveled swords, the Indians fell back before their rush. Then Norton turned, and led the party into the house on the run. To their surprise and delight they found that Floy had pulled down and barred the windows, and fastened the back door. As the heavy door in front swung to its place, they felt themselves safe for a moment. But not long, for the outer gate was now opened, and the whole band of savage warriors poured in.

"If I could get a shot at that villain Carrington, or at Flying Cloud, I would stop *their* loping forever," muttered Jack. "The dirty thieves."

The house itself was a fortress, as much as the stockade. Having taken the outwork, it by no means followed that the house must fall. The wood of which it was built was the sycamore, and it would be troublesome to fire it. The doors were of solid planking, five inches thick, and would stand

THE RED SCALPER.

against any ordinary blow. Each window was shielded by a sliding panel of the same material, kept in its place by four parallel bars of iron, two inches thick. The walls of the house were twenty feet high, and near the top projected over the main part of the building about two feet, with loopholes below, so that it was impossible for any one to hide beneath the wall without incurring the danger of being picked off by a rifle-ball. Leaving the negroes below, with instructions to call them if they were in danger, the three white men took their rifles and ran up to the roof. In the darkness they could not distinguish figures, but knew that a large party filled the space within the stockade. Jack fired at random into one of the groups, and heard a yell of agony from some unfortunate.

"Sarbed him right, blame his picter," yelled Pomp, from below. "Gib it to 'em, marse! Dey's awful villains, an' jes' good enough to go to de debbil, an' nowhar else."

At the first shot the Indians rushed forward to shelter themselves under the walls, but a stern voice called them back, and ordered them outside the stockade. There was only one way to take it, and he determined to try it. In the hurry of the assault, the ladders, some five or six in number, had been left outside. These were dragged in, under a fire from the block, and laid upon the earth, pointing toward it. The besieged heard muttered commands pass from mouth to mouth; directly the space was filled again with a dusky crowd, wild with the ardor of battle. They raised the ladders together. What could three men do? Two of the ladders were thrown down, but before they could reach another, a dozen dusky forms had darted over the parapet of the block, and the close grapple was renewed with tenfold violence. Despairingly, but bravely, these noble men fought. Pomp and Sam darted up the steps and joined in the fray. The old negro, with his own hands, flung a burly savage over the parapet to the solid earth below. But the enemy were now ten to one. Jack Norton, grappling with a savage, fell down the steps into the room below. Even while locked in a deadly grapple, he saw Floy struggling in the strong grasp of Flying Cloud, who was laughing at her futile attempts to escape.

"Escape if you can," she cried to her lover. "You may help me yet."

"I can not leave you," he gasped, as he dealt a blow which freed him from his adversary.

"If you *love* me, go! You may yet save me from this dreadful man."

Jack saw that she was right. The tumult above was nearly over, and he knew that the others were either taken or slain. He made a leap forward, struck down a man who opposed him, and gained the back-door, which he swung in the face of two savages who pursued him. Running round to the front, he met the Weasel, who made a dash at him. There was no time to use a weapon, but Norton sent out two blows from the shoulder, quick and sure, which knocked the Weasel against the side of the stockade. The next moment he was out of the broken gate and running across the opening toward the point at which lay the light skiff in which Floy had brought Carrington to their once happy home. The creek was safely reached and the skiff lay undisturbed at its stake. The oars were in it still. Pushing off hastily, he bent to the work, and shot down-stream at his best speed. Nor did he feel safe until he had passed out of the narrow mouth into the open lake. Then, letting his oars drop, he laid his head upon his hands and gave way to bitter grief. At the moment when he had gained the love of the one so dear to him, he had lost her, and been forced to fly, though only when she enjoined him by his love for her. It was to save her that he had fled.

As he sat there, in speechless agony, he was not aware of a slight ripple in the water near the boat, nor did he know that an Indian had suddenly risen from the calm surface, and was peering at him curiously. The next moment the boat rocked violently, and a tall figure leaped in. Jack turned upon him like a tiger, but stopped when a calm voice said :

"How do you do, Jack? What happen at Hubbard's?"

It was Red Hatchet, who had not fallen by the rifles of the Indians. He had been slightly wounded in the shoulder by a stray bullet, and the wound had bled pretty freely, and given rise to the supposition that he was dead. But it was only a ruse on his part. He sunk after the first fire, and swam

under water in the channel, close to the rushes on the bank. Being long accustomed to swimming under water, it was over a minute before he rose, and then it was among the reeds close to the bank, where he remained quiet. After the departure of the Indians, he slipped out and followed them, but found it impossible to get within the inclosure. He had watched until night, and was just preparing to attempt to enter the stockade, when the yells of the savages apprised him that they had effected an entrance. He had seen the escape of his friend, and knowing that he must make for the mouth of the creek had crossed the country to that point, reaching it in time to intercept Jack, as seen.

"My friend," said he, "the heart of Red Hatchet is very sad. The Oneidas, who at heart love Yonondio, have taken the strong house, and the good old man, who always gave food to the hungry and a bed to the weary, must die. The young warrior, tall as a pine, who called him father, must lose his scalp; the brave men, with the black skins but brave hearts, must fall; and the Pale Lily will go into the wigwam of the Flying Cloud."

"Never!" cried Norton. "Not while I live."

"Who are these who have done this wrong?" cried the warrior. "Who, but Praying Indians. Who are the Praying Indians? They are Caugh-na-wa-ga Oneidas. A black cloud has burst upon the house of Hubbard. My heart is very sore, but I grieve more deeply for you, friend of my heart. Where is the maiden who was to go into the lodge, and make the fire bright?"

"Do not speak of it, Red Hatchet," he said, in a husky tone, "unless you wish to drive me mad."

"See," said Red Hatchet, extending his hands. "You see me before you, Red Hatchet of the Onondagas, once called Eagle Eye by the Yengees. Behold me, and hearken to my words! Hear me what I say! I will never go back to the village where my home is, until I have slain the Flying Cloud, or have seen him dead, and the Pale Lily is delivered out of his hands. It is spoken!"

"Do you swear to that?" cried Norton.

"It is spoken," repeated the Indian. "What need of saying more?"

"And I am with you. In spite of orders, in spite of every thing, I will go in search of my darling."

"Good!" said the Indian. "You are brave. You are like the young white man who was my friend so long, who was with me when Yonondio came down upon Oswego. We will go together; let the Weasel and the Flying Cloud look to themselves!"

"Hark!" said the young man. "Do you hear the demons? How they exult over the ruin they have brought upon the happiest home between Albany and Oswego! *Praying Indians!* A blighting curse upon them!"

"They are dogs! They have learned the prayers of the black-robed priests, and wear strings of beads, to say prayers upon; but for what do they pray? For rifles and powder and rum, that they may go out upon the war-path and slay those who were once their brothers! They are vagabonds from every tribe of the Six Nations, who think they can shed more blood fighting under the banner of the French than the Yengee. They are dogs and the sons of dogs. Many of their scalps have hung at my girdle, and now woe to them, for never more shall Red Hatchet know rest until this band is punished for the wrong it has done."

"Which way will they go?"

"Back to Canada, to be with the black-robés who will give thanks when they return red with the blood of Yengees. See, they have set the house on fire!"

"The scoundrels! However, it will not burn long. If Floy were not there, I should pray that the powder might take fire and send them nearer heaven than they can ever get by the mummary of their Jesuit priests. But, the Flying Cloud is too cunning."

"Listen," said the chief. "They come this way. Take your oars and get in the shadow of the trees yonder, where we can see them as they pass by."

The splash of paddles announced the coming down-stream of the enemy. Jack did as his Indian friend desired, keeping on the opposite side of the creek from the ill-fated stockade. Soon the canoes and boats shot out of the creek and headed down the lake. The two friends watched them keenly.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MOONLIGHT COMBAT.

THERE were three boats in the group. The leading one was a small four-oared barge, which had been used by Captain Hubbard for lighter service, when he wished to cross the water. The next was a large canoe, holding eight men, and the third a smaller one, containing six. The rest of the party had gone by land. In the first boat they saw the two negroes pulling, with Flying Cloud at the stern, holding a pistol in each hand, which he handled in such a way that Norton thought the story of his having white blood in his veins must have some truth in it. The negroes were evidently pulling under threats of a shot if they made any show of insubordination. Yet there was a stubborn way about Pomp's manner of pulling which showed that he would break out if he had an opportunity. Floy sat in the bow.

"Now, see yer," said Pomp, resting on his oar a moment. "Don' you try for to skeer me. You can't do dat, no way you kin fix it. I's nuffin but a nigger, but I ain't easy skeered ; so now *dar*. Put dat in your pipe an' smoke it."

This speech was distinctly heard by the men under the trees.

"Black man," said Flying Cloud, "you row fast, or I shoot."

"You don' dare to do it," snorted Pomp. "Who's a-gwine to row de boat if you's to kill me? G'way, Indian! I ain't a fool, an' I know you don' mean to kill me, so wot's de use to talk? I's row de boat safe, 'cause Miss Flo' is in it. If she wasn't, you might shoot me jest as soon as you like, for I'd nebber row away Marse Walt's boat for no low-lived truck like you ; so *dar* now!"

This ebullition of spleen over, the negro bent to his oar and the boats shot out into the lake. A fine breeze was blowing, and a sail-boat would have done finely.

"Red Hatchet," said Norton. "I have thought of a plan

They have not taken the sail-boat, and I don't think they have burned her. Let us follow them in that."

"Tip over; drown," said the chief.

"Not we. I have not forgotten how to manage such craft. Let me alone for that. All you have to do is to obey my orders, and mind you understand them."

He turned the bow of the boat for the outlet, pulling with all his might. The boat to which he referred was a light launch, with a single sheet and jib. It lay in the small boat-house built for its accommodation up the stream. In their haste the Indians had overlooked it, and Norton found all in perfect order. The two men worked vigorously, and dragged her out into the stream. Here they stepped the mast and bent the canvas. When all was ready, they went up to look at the house, for they had yet plenty of time to overhaul the boats. All was in ruins—a sad, sad sight to look upon—a Paradise suddenly turned into a waste. The fire was dying out of itself.

"I know that Hubbard had some rifles and ammunition *cached* outside the house," said Norton. "If we can find them, we shall be more ready for action. I do not like the idea of following a party like that without arms."

A careful search revealed a repository of powder and arms, which the captain had placed there as a provision in time of need. A half-dozen muskets, a very heavy bore rifle, and a full supply of ammunition, were borne to the "Fluorney," and the light but staunch craft was headed down-stream, the jib only being set. Norton took the tiller. The Indian uttered a pleased exclamation as she glided down the stream.

"She is a bird," he said. "She has wings to fly away."

"Wait till we get her fairly out of the stream, where I can hoist the mainsail, and you will see whether she can fly or not. I know the craft. Now attend to me, chief. You have never sailed before, but I know you are quick to learn any thing. This rope is the peak halliard; this is the sheet halliard. I will say 'sheet' and 'peak' when I want you to pull one or the other. Steady! All right."

As he spoke the "Floy" glided through the opening into the lake. Here they ran on for a few moments under the jib alone, while the young man instructed the Indian upon the

various little points necessary in managing the main-sheet of a sail-boat. The chief was a ready learner, and in half an hour he was quite a sailor, as far as attending to the sheet was concerned.

"All right," said Norton. "I knew you would learn it. Now, as they are out of sight, what course do you think we ought to take?"

"They will go to the land which Yonondio, head chief of Canada, has given to the Praying Indians," replied the chief.

"Then we must sail due east. I am glad that I have learned to sail upon this lake. Steady. Stand by the sheet. Haul away on the sheet. Belay! Take a turn there. Good enough. You are quite a sailor already. Now the peak. Belay! Take a turn *there*. Now take the sheet-rope and watch me."

The chief sat down upon the thwart just in front of the young ensign, and the wind, which was freshening, filled the sail; the light craft bent over to the wind and darted through the water in gallant style, while Jack handled the tiller with the hand of a master.

"We've got them at an advantage, chief," said Jack. "When it comes to the close grip, never loose your hold of the sheet. Hang on to that like grim death, but lie down to be out of the way of the balls."

"Can Praying Indians shoot?" said the chief, haughtily. "I will not hide from them."

"You must be cautious. Remember that they have six in the boat which carries the captain and Charlie, eight in the other, and the chief in the first. Fifteen against two are long odds. But, I propose to make the boat do most of the fighting. Steady! We have gone far enough on this tack. Stand by the boom. Remember what I told you. Hard a lee?"

The boom flew over, and the light boat bent on over the swelling tide upon the other tack. The boats of the Flying Cloud ere long detected the "winged canoe," and paused at the unusual sight. What could it mean? Who was on the water? The Oneidas came to a dead halt. Captain Hubbard and Floy both well understood the nature of the sail.

The distance between the launch and the boats might have

been a quarter of a mile, and the distance from the shore two miles. It was evident that the Indians did not like the look of the sail-craft, for they headed for the shore and put out all their strength. Jack put the helm hard down and the "Floy" changed her course to cut them off. At the rate she was going scarcely two minutes passed when she dashed in between the boats and the shore, and changing her course with a celerity which was a credit to her handling, headed down upon the canoes.

Up to this time the Indians had supposed her to be full of men; but now, having seen by the moonlight that only two enemies were there, they changed their tactics and came on at full speed, yelling like demons. Jack, undaunted by the yells, kept her head toward the coming boats. If they had expected him to lower his sail for the fight, they were grievously mistaken. The prow of the launch struck the largest canoe in the bow and crashed through her, scattering her fragments on the water. Wild forms leaped upon the bow of the sail-boat only to be sent flying overboard by the ready hatchet of the chief, who held the rope with one hand while he struck out with the other. There was a low grating sound along the keel, such as could never be forgotten, and the "Floy" flew on her course, followed by a volley from the remaining canoe. But, the two men had stooped, and beyond a few holes in the heavy sail, no harm was done. The sharp, whip-crack of a rifle, in the hands of Red Hatchet, sent one brawny savage down to the lake bottom, food for the fishes.

"Ready!" cried Jack, raising his head. "After we sink the next, stand by to save the captain and Charlie. Hurrah! We are doing well. Hard a-lee!"

The launch went about like a top, and dashed down upon the last canoe, which met them bravely. Half a dozen heads were yet bobbing on the surface of the water. These were the unfortunates who had occupied the first craft. The Indians, who were more cunning this time, laid their canoe so that she struck head on. Of course she went down, but the occupants had time to gain a foothold on the Fluorney. Six to two were long odds. Jack thought of an expedient. The Indians were not yet fairly in the boat, but were clinging to the ~~canoe~~ with one foot inside. Two had gained a

secure stand, but they were all upon the same side of the boat.

"Lie down, Red Hatchet! Ready! Hard a-lee!" cried Jack, almost screaming in his excitement.

The expedient was successful. Red Hatchet let go the sheet, and the heavy boom flew over, sweeping the boat clear of the savages. One of them sunk to rise no more. The rest were floundering in the water.

"Look out for the captain and Charlie!" shouted Jack in a clear, ringing tone of voice, "and stand by to haul them in. Captain ahoy!"

"Here we are, Jack," said the voice of the captain.

The maneuver had found him ready for action, and when the crash came, he and Charlie, diving under the launch, came up on the weather-side, completely hidden by the lift of the boat. They were quickly dragged in. Red Hatchet gave a yell that fairly made the waters ring.

"Thank God!" murmured Floy. She knew her father was safe.

Old Pomp grinned from ear to ear.

"What shall we do with these scoundrels?"

"Knock them on the head, every man of them," said Charlie.

"No time now," said Red Hatchet. "Other boat get away; den we lose the captain's flower. Go for the other boat, Captain Jack. Quick!"

"Ready!" shouted Jack.

The launch went about again. The four-oar skiff had so gained upon them, that she was rapidly nearing the shore.

Flying Cloud, seeing that the novel contest must go against him, had paused to pick up three of the men spilled out of the first boat, the Weasel among them. This loaded his craft down too deep for fast pulling, and, without a word, Pomp and Sam were pitched overboard, and their oars were seized by the Oneidas, who lost no time in making for the land. The "Floy" was coming down like a race-horse, but the Oneidas reached the shore first, and prepared to give the boat a warm reception. At the same time, Flying Cloud shouted his war-cry, and was answered from below. Norton was obliged to confess, sadly against his will, that they dared not

land. It was evident that the rest of the party were coming up the shore on foot.

"Jack," said Captain Hubbard, as the launch stood out from the land, after picking up Pomp and Sam, "I have much to thank you for. Do not take it so much to heart that you have failed to save Floy. There is time yet to do all that. These Indians must travel fast and far to escape us."

"If we only had arms," said Charlie. "But here we are, six of us, and not a rifle in the party."

"Wrong there, my boy," answered Jack. "We have muskets and rifles for all. I tapped your secret arsenal, and brought enough for all, and that blunderbuss there expressly for Pomp, knowing that he prefers to shoot Indians at long range."

"Now hole on a minnit, Marse Jack!" cried Pomp, swelling up with indignation. "I's full, I is! I wants to spoke a few times. Don' let no white man say Pompey Hubbard is afraid of dem red niggers. Dey's a low, rotten, turkey-trottin', fly-blowed, low lot ob no-count hogs. I's for gwine rite to de shore an' buttin' ebery beast ob dem into kingdom come, or any odder place, I is. So dar, now!"

Red Hatchet's grim face visibly relaxed: a smile *almost* found expression at the negro's comical wrath.

"What shall we do, Captain?" asked Jack.

"I think we had better stand up the lake," said the captain, "and land on the east side of Hunter's Point. There is a good place to hide the boat, and we may need it when we return. The accursed Indians shall not drive me from my estate."

"What do you think, Red Hatchet?"

"That is a good way," said the Onondaga, in broken English. "Mus' come dat way to go to Canada. Wait for 'em."

"Then we are agreed," said Jack. "I think you had better take the sheet, Charley, so as to give Red Hatchet a rest. It is new work to him, but he has done nobly."

"No," said the chief. "Let me do it. The canoe is a bird. Where are the Oneidas? Some have sunk in the dark water, some have reached the land, but their canoes are broken. They were children in our hands."

"We have not thanked you yet for your part in our rescue," said the captain.

"No thanks," said the chief, half angrily. "Listen, and I will tell you a tale. Three moons ago an Indian was hunting by the lake. He hunted with a bow, because the Oneidas were many upon the war-trail, and they would follow the sound of a gun as the crows come where they scent the carnation far off in the sky. An arrow split upon the string and entered the eye of the Onondaga. He was in great pain. He thought he was *spoiled*, and his eye gone forever. A white man came by and saw him sitting there, with his head upon his arms. The white man was very kind. He took the Indian home to his wigwam, and tended him like a brother. He cured his eye, so that it is now as bright as its fellow. He gave the Indian warm blankets at night, and made him sit down with his children when he took food. When he went away, the Indian asked: 'What must I pay for the good medicine?' 'Nothing!' 'What for the warm blankets and the food?' 'Nothing!' There was nothing more to pay for Kindness can not be paid for in beaver-skins. *I* was that Onondaga; Hubbard was that white man, and now: he wants to thank me. No!"

The "Floy" swept round a point, headed into a little bay, and ran up to the shore, just as the captain had given the Indian a fervent hand-pressure. They found a sheltered nook where she could lie safely, and took down her mast, put the sails in the cuddy, astern, and clambered up the bank. This done, they agreed to remain quiet while the Onondaga went out on a scout to discover the plans and number of the enemy.

CHAPTER X.

RED BLOOD AND MIXED.

In the midst of the contest on the lake, the girl had good cause to glory in her lover. She had seen him, bold, upright, holding the tiller with an unshaking hand, as the launch came down upon the canoe. She had heard a wild tumult, the crash of the boats at their meeting, and had seen him ride triumphant over the ruins of his foe. But, Flying Cloud sat there in the stern, with the pistols in his hands, looking at her with a fierce intentness which she could not understand.

"Look, daughter of the white man," he said. "If you stir hand or foot, or shriek out, you die."

"Do you think to frighten me, Indian?" she said. "It is not in my blood. Kill me if you like, for I am a woman and in your power. It will be a brave deed to boast of when you return to your village."

"They shall not take you back," he hissed. "See. We have lost eight of our men, and have not taken a single scalp. We had prisoners, but this son of the bad spirit has taken them away. I will not rest until his scalp hangs at my girdle."

"You are running away now. Why do you not turn back and fight him?"

"*Sacre!*" cried the Indian.

Floy started. The tone in which he said it was so like that of some one else who had spoken French in her hearing not long since, that she eyed the Indian suspiciously.

"You speak French?" she said.

"Why should I not speak the language of my friends when I know that of my enemies?" replied the chief, haughtily. "Let us have no more talk. Weasel, signal to the braves. The men of the Oneidas are not used to being chased by a boy and a red dog of an Onondaga."

The Weasel shook his head and muttered to himself, and

continued this even after they landed. Flying Cloud turned to him in anger.

"Why do you mutter?" he said. "Do the Hurons of the lakes dare to dictate terms to the Iroquois? Be careful what you do."

"It is no good," said the Huron. "When we came into the big wigwam, I said: 'Kill all; leave no one of the accursed race alive.' But, you were too merciful to them. You said: 'Let us have prisoners, and take them to our wigwams.' We took them, but where are they now? They are alive and will follow you!"

"Dog!" cried the chief. "Do you rebel? See how I deal with a traitor."

Snatching a hatchet from his belt he dealt the Huron a terrible blow, which stretched him bleeding at his feet. Flying Cloud looked scornfully down upon him and then turned to the few Hurons left.

"Let the Hurons of the lakes speak. Am I no better than a dead dog, to be insulted by one of your tribe? Would any one here share the fate of the Weasel? He has only to speak, and the Weasel shall not lie there alone."

No one said a word, for not one of the Hurons was hardy enough to say that his chief had been wronged in any way. They knew that the Flying Cloud had it in his power to set the Oneidas upon them, and slay them, every one. But, the Weasel was not dead, though the blow had been a fearful one. He rose, covered with blood, and faced the Oneida chief.

"Flying Cloud, look me in the face," he cried. "I am the Weasel, a chief of the Hurons, as high in power in my tribe as you are in your own, and mine is the greater tribe. Be patient. Hear me out, for the boat has gone away, leaving us no prisoner but a girl. The time was when I was of service to the Flying Cloud. He has forgotten that, as it seems. Men do not walk with a broken stick. They throw it away and take a new one. The Weasel is the broken stick. He is worn out in the service, and you strike him down like a dog."

"Then why do you come in my way?" retorted the chief. "Why do you dare to insult me? I am above you here and

you speak as if my work had not been well done? You deserved what you got."

"Perhaps good; perhaps not."

"What the Huron does or thinks is of no concern now," said Flying Cloud, in high disdain. "Let us meet the others; we have talked enough."

The Weasel fell back, with gleaming eyes, and followed just behind them. They soon met the remainder of the party coming up, and as the moon was going down, they determined to camp where they were. The Flying Cloud, though he had taken the maid prisoner, was unexpectedly gentle in his attentions to her. He brought her blankets to sit upon, and offered her such food as they had. But, grief at the evil prospect before her blinded her to all his efforts for her comfort. She knew that they were on the long trail to the Canadas, and that years might elapse before she would ever see her home again, if, indeed, she ever escaped from the hands of her captors; and what greater, more horrible affliction was in store only the heart of woman could understand.

"Let not the heart of the Pale Lily be troubled," said Flying Cloud, in the language of the English, which he spoke well. "She has lost some friends, that is true. Friends are often lost in the world, but others are to be found. Cast all behind you which you have ever seen or known, oh, Lily of the Yengees, and embrace the new. If you have lost friends, there are new ones ready to love you."

Floy tried to conciliate him. "Chief," she said, "if you take a bird from its native woods, and place it in a cage, does it not beat its wings against the bars and die?"

He snatched at the idea eagerly and made out a case for himself.

"Good! You speak the truth. The wildwood is the place of all others for the free. They live happy, under the bending bough, and pine away in the towns of the white man."

"No, chief. It is not that. Where the home of the *heart* is, there we are happy. Send me back to my friends. They can not be happy again until I am safe with them. What harm have I ever done you?"

"None, daughter of the pale-faces; none. I am a chief"

of the Praying Oneidas. It is just that so great a warrior should have some one to keep the lodge-fire bright in his wigwam. I have chosen you, and have come from far off purposely to take you. That is what brought me to your father's fort and made me assault it."

"I can not be your wife. Remember that I am of white blood, and that the blood of two races should never unite."

"Have you heard what men say of me?" he cried, fiercely. "They will tell you that I, the Flying Cloud of the Oneidas, have both the blood of the white and red man in my veins. I have come from afar to take you, and make you my wife. It is spoken, and I can not change."

"I would kill myself first."

He said no more, but rising quickly, stalked away to another place where his subordinates were sitting, and entered into consultation with them. The Weasel did not join in the conference, but sat a little way apart, with uplifted head, watching the others. His own followers sat near him, but dared say nothing to him while in this mood. The Oneidas remained in consultation for half an hour. Floy, worn out at last, lay down upon the blankets, and slept the sleep of innocence, forgetful of her sorrow.

The Flying Cloud seemed ill at ease; and, after posting his guards, walked up and down before the fire for half an hour, after the rest were sleeping. Only the Weasel had not lain down, but was sitting with his head upon his knees, and his whole attitude betraying the deepest dejection. He had good cause to be sad, for he had been of great service in his day to Flying Cloud. He had risked his life to save that of the Oneida half a dozen times, and now had been beaten down like a dog for daring to raise a word in opposition to that of this fierce dictator.

The Flying Cloud paid no attention to him, for he had been long accustomed to expect implicit obedience from his followers. He continued to pace up and down under the trees, now and then glancing in a quick, nervous way toward the spot where Floy lay asleep. After a long time he bent his steps that way, stepping lightly, so as not to disturb her. She was lying with her head upon one arm and the other arm across her bosom, with her luxuriant hair clothing her

like a mantle. The faint light of the low fire, falling on her face, made a sort of glory about it. The Indian looked at her for some time, and then sat down at the foot of the tree, a few feet away, to watch her while she slept.

Intent upon her face, he did not see that some dark object was approaching him along the ground, creeping like a snake, or rather like a tiger, on his prey. It was a man with a long knife in his hand—Red Hatchet! Slowly, inch by inch, he was nearing the reclining figure of Flying Cloud, when the Weasel, who had been sitting in the same attitude all the time, rose slowly to his feet and came toward him with cautious steps.

Uncertain whether he had been seen or not, Red Hatchet began to retreat slowly, keeping his eye upon the movements of the Weasel, who was now between him and Flying Cloud. Not knowing any thing of the insult which the chief had received, the Onondaga was much surprised when he saw the Weasel, instead of following him, turn toward Flying Cloud, with his hatchet in his hand, evidently meaning mischief. Red Hatchet kept quiet, and watched.

With the caution for which he was justly famed upon the border, the Weasel crept upon his foe. The animal from which he received his name could not have moved with so light a step. He balanced the heavy hatchet for the blow, and felt a thrill of joy at his heart as he thought how he would be revenged upon the man who had so grossly insulted him.

Nearer and nearer he came. Only a few feet separated them now, and this would be shortly passed. Quick as thought it flashed through the mind of the Onondaga that Floy would be worse off in the hands of a man like the Weasel than in those of Flying Cloud, and he determined to save him.

Seizing a small stone which lay under his hand, he threw it at Flying Cloud over the head of the Weasel. It struck the chief and he started up with a shout, just in time to escape the descending weapon of the Weasel. Seeing that his game was up, the Huron attacked him boldly, and in his surprise at the assault, might have slain him had not the guards rushed in and seized the would-be murderer, who fought like

a demon, and severely wounded two of the guards before he could be secured. If the struggle had not taken place directly in front of Floy, the Onondaga would have attempted her rescue, but it could not be done then. The Weasel, absolutely foaming with rage, made desparate efforts to escape.

"Foul-hearted dog!" shouted the warrior. "A Huron laughs you in the face. He has no fear of such a hound as you."

"Stop his mouth," said Flying Cloud. "Let him not babble."

"You whose blood is half white and half red, the son of nobody, how dare you insult a chief of the Hurons?"

They tied him and forced a gag into his mouth, though he seized the hand of one of the men who did the duty and bit it to the bone. So tightly did he set his teeth upon it that they were obliged to strike him in the mouth with a hatchet to force him to loose his hold. After a struggle they succeeded, and the villain was bound.

"Now see, dog of a Huron," cried the chief. "When morning comes, you shall know how a man dies who would have murdered me."

Unable to speak, the Weasel only replied by a malignant glance. They tied him down to a stunted sapling and placed a guard over him, for fear his friends might set him at liberty. Floy, who had awakened, seized the opportunity to fly, but was seen and dragged back by an Oneida, who had been instructed not to lose sight of her for a single instant, at the peril of his life.

"Let it not get into your head that you can escape me," said Flying Cloud. "I have not labored so hard to attain you to lose you now. Not all the power of the boy who loves you, of your father and brother, of Red Hatchet, or the black men, if they are not drowned, can save you from me. You are mine, and mine only."

"What will you do with the Weasel?" she said. "What did he try to do?"

"To kill me," cried the other, angrily. "What would the white men do if a man tried to murder? They would kill him. So do we."

Floy shuddered and cast a quick glance at the figure bound

to the sapling. Flying Cloud followed her glance and again met the malignant gaze of those fiery orbs.

"He must die," muttered the chief. "I should not be safe while he trod the earth. Let him perish by the dog's death he deserves."

"Listen, warriors and chiefs. At early dawn prepare to look upon the death of a traitor. And now, return to your rest, for in the morning we shall have much to do."

"How will he die?" she said. "Must I see it?"

"You are not like the Indian women," he said. "They love to see a man die who deserves death. No; you need not see him die unless you will. You have only to speak to Flying Cloud, and your will is a law to him."

"Then I will that you let me go free."

"You ask too much," replied the chief, in his gloomy way. "More than I can do for you. Understand me, daughter of the white man. I have said you should be mine, and have come from the villages of the Praying Indians to take you. I am not a fool, to let you go, now that I have you in my power."

"I wish the weapon of the Huron had been true," she said. "I doubt if he could be as cruel as you."

"Let us talk no more now. Lie down again, and get your rest. To-morrow we finish with the Weasel, and then we go to my home in the north."

She saw that it was vain to entreat him, and again lay down upon the blanket. The chief remained to guard her.

CHAPTER XI.

THE OUTCAST.

AT early morning the warriors gathered at the signal of the chief, and taking their prisoner with them, set out upon their journey. The Weasel was led between two men, securely guarded, and with bound hands. His sullen eyes were bent upon the earth. From the moment of his seizure he had not spoken a word. He knew the Flying Cloud too well to expect any mercy, and did not look for any aid from his companions, overawed as they were by the superior numbers of the Oneidas. With all his diminutiveness, the Huron had a sort of tiger's bravery which became him well, and he could meet death without flinching.

Even Floy, who had so much cause to hate him, could not forbear a feeling of compassion for him in his utter desolation. Alone, in the midst of those who had been his friends, and soon to die at their hands !

It was mid-day before they halted, beside a shining brook, which flowed into the lake upon its eastern end. A bright, beautiful day. The birds sung joyously in the tree-tops, and there seemed no trace of human passion about the beautiful place. Yet how soon the fairest scenes in nature are darkened by the presence of man. The Weasel was bound to a tree, and the party proceeded to cook some food. Flying Cloud brought a portion to Floy, and asked her to partake.

"Daughter of the pale-face," he said, "it grieves my heart to see you sad. Eat, that you may live."

"I do not care for food," she replied. "It is better that I should die, than to go on with you."

"Eat!" he cried, fiercely. "You shall not die for want of food. Eat! It shall never be said that the Oneidas starve their prisoners. You *shall* eat."

Seeing him so angry, and desiring to conciliate him, she forced herself to eat a little. When she declared herself satisfied, he removed the food, and uttered a low cry, which brought

his men about him. He stood at the foot of a tree, not far from the Weasel.

"Warriors of the Oneidas," he cried, "friends of Yonondio, listen to my words. You have made me your chief, and I believe you love me. It is a great thing to be a chief of braves like the Oneidas, and to have Yonondio for a friend. I have been with you long enough to learn that the Oneidas know how to punish a murderer. Here is a man who has sought my life, and we will give him a trial. If we find him guilty, he shall suffer; if he is not guilty, he shall go free."

The warriors gave back an angry hiss as they looked at the prisoner. Few of them had ever loved the Weasel, who was far too vindictive and savage by nature to win more than their fear. Some had even hated him, but dared not proceed against him. Now, all their venom was turned upon the defenseless man.

"Speak, Massewona, son of Gittewan," cried Flying Cloud. "What say you to the charge against the Weasel. Shall he live or die?"

A stout chief rose at the summons.

"Massewona will speak. He has never been a friend of the Weasel, and has said he was a blot upon the tribe. The time has come to wipe away the stain. Let the red dog who has tried to slay the war-chief, Flying Cloud, receive the punishment of a dog."

"Massewona has spoken," said the Flying Cloud, inclining his head. "Let another speak, and tell us what they think."

One by one the principal chiefs and warriors rose, and expressed an opinion. There was not one dissenting voice. All judged him worthy of death or disgrace. A scornful smile played across the features of the Weasel. When all had spoken, Flying Cloud turned to him.

"Weasel of the Hurons," he said, "you have heard what has been said. Speak and let us know why you should not suffer, according to our law. Throw off his bonds, and let Massewona and Gareno guard him well."

They loosed the Huron, and led him up near the Flying Cloud.

"Speak," commanded the chief.

"I am the Weasel of the Hurons," he cried, "and I call on you to listen to my words. You have hated me long, and wished my death. Let me tell you a story. There was a man among the Oneidas who was not all of Indian blood, but who was the son of a mighty warrior of Yonondio and a princess of the Oneidas. He was made a chief, and both the Oneidas and Yonondio loved him well. There was a Huron of the lakes who was his friend, and saved his life many times in battle. This Huron loved him as well as if all Indian, and none of the accursed white blood flowed in his veins. Once this Huron was guilty of a little fault, when he was in anger, and said some hasty words. This chief with white blood in his veins drew a hatchet, and stretched him almost dead at his feet."

"Go on," said Flying Cloud.

"The Huron had loved him before, but now his heart turned bitter in his bosom. It was so cruel a return to a man who had loved him well. He sat over the fire and thought of it, and his blood grew hotter in his veins. What would they say to him in the Huron village, when his warriors came home and told the tale? He rose up to kill his insulter, but failed. Warriors and chiefs, I am the Huron; yonder is the chief of whom I spoke. Now hear me say the rest.

"I am ready to die; neither do I ask mercy at your hands. I am sorry I failed, for I would have killed him like a dog as he is, and made his maiden my squaw. But, my dream is ended: do with me as you will."

"It is spoken," said the Flying Cloud. "He shall suffer. But do not think, black dog of a Huron, that you shall die like a warrior. No; you would have done murder, and a murderer's fate is yours. We will take from you the totem of the Hurons; the mark of a chief shall go from you."

"Stop!" shrieked the Huron, now for the first time showing feeling. "I am a chief of the Hurons, and you dare not cut the totem from my shoulder. Listen to me, villain of the milk blood! Am I a dog that you should do me this wrong? No, no, no! Let me be burned, and you shall not see an eyelash quiver; but you have not the right to disgrace me."

"Yet it shall be done," said Flying Cloud. "It is for the

medicine-man to say. Let him come forth and face me. Gabenay, son of the Thunder, come forth, and speak to the chief."

A stunted figure, in a grotesque and horrible dress, came out at the command. A man barely four feet high, painted in alternate rings of white and black, not only upon his face but over his entire body. His robe was covered with curious devices of snakes, lizards and tortoise. His nose was hooked like the beak of an eagle. This was the medicine-man who had remained with the Praying Indians, in spite of their pretended "conversion."

"Speak, Gabenay," cried Flying Cloud. "Is this man guilty? Shall the totem be cut from his shoulder?"

"It shall," howled the horrible-looking wretch. "I will cut it from his flesh, and he shall die disgraced. Make a post, sons of the Oneida; make a post for the victim, and then behold the work of Gabenay, the son of the Thunder."

They cut down a small sapling which stood in the center of the open space at about the height of a man's head, and proceeded to bind the prisoner to it. He was in an ecstasy of rage. If they had tortured him, he was prepared, and could have borne it bravely. But, to die disgraced, with the mark of his tribe cut from his breast, was more than he could bear. No one, who does not know the Indian reverence for symbols, can think how terribly this man suffered at the thought of the dishonor he was about to endure."

"They will do it!" he shouted. "They will make a chief a dog! Fools, do you hear the words of a Huron? I am the Weasel of the lakes, and have taken many scalps! What right have you to do it? Hark to my words. Do what you will, say what you will, burn me with irons, and I will endure it; but do not make a chief a dog."

"Flying Cloud," cried Floy, in agony, "I can not endure this."

"I forgot," said the chief. "But, there is no warrior here who will go away and stay with you. You must witness the disgrace. If you do not like it, turn aside your head. Go on. Gabenay, advance! Braves, form the circle."

The warriors formed in a double line, and marched about the post, singing one of their weird chants.

“ Who is this that stands before us,
 On his brow the mark of evil,
 In his hands the seeds of sorrow ?
 Who can tell us, who can name him,
 Who has power to tell his story ?
 Gitche Manitou, the mighty,
 Who is this that stands before us ?

“ Gitche Manitou, the mighty,
 There are scalps within his girdle,
 He hath been a chief of warriors ;
 Tell us, then, why stands he bound here,
 With the man of death before him,
 Waiting for the chieftain’s signal ?

“ Hark, we hear the Master’s answer,
 Coming to us on the west-wind,
 Breaking through the leaves and branches,
 Saying to us, ‘ ‘tis the Weasel,
 He was once a chief of warriors,
 Make him but a dog before me ! ’

A shout went up at the conclusion of this barbarous chant, and the chiefs entered the ring, and took their stand in front of the prisoner. As a signal was given, the clamor ceased, and all turned toward the Weasel. He had now composed himself to his fate, whatever it might be, as two of the chiefs came near him, and went through a formula always used upon like occasions.

“ Who is this thus bound to a sapling, my brother ? He hath the look of a Huron. “ Why is he thus bound ? ”

“ He is not a Huron ! ” cried the other. “ If he is, he has the totem on his shoulder.”

The first speaker advanced, and baring the shoulder of the Weasel, showed the mark of his tribe, pricked into the flesh. The Weasel winced as the chief ran his fingers over the emblem.

“ This is a Huron, my brother,” said the first, in a tone of surprise.

“ My brother is wrong,” said the other. “ He is a dog, who has stolen the totem of the great tribe of the Hurons. Come ; let us be just to them, and cut it from his arm, to send back to the tribe.”

“ Agreed,” said the other. “ But, we are chiefs. It is not just that we should sully our hands with the blood of a dog.

There is one among us whose trade it is to take the flesh from dogs."

"What is he called?"

"Gabenay, son of the Thunder. Behold, he is here!" was the answer.

Having performed their part, the two fell back. Floy, thoroughly disgusted by the spectacle, was yet forced to look on. She now saw the revolting executioner advance, flourishing a knife in his hand, while he chanted in a horrible tone, before which the prisoner quailed. It was a sad fate for him who had been the leader of these men, to behold them ranged about him with malevolent eyes, calmly waiting for his death.

"Dog!" cried Gabenay. "You are mine. I claim you in the name of the Spirit of Evil. I will make you mine from this hour. Behold in my hand the sharp knife, which has never shed the blood of any but dogs. But it never was defiled as it will be when stained by your blood. You have stolen the totem of the Hurons, and shall not have it to convey to the happy hunting-grounds, to deceive the Gitche Manitou."

"Have I no friend among these warriors?" cried the Weasel. "None to give me a blow with the knife, that I may have a warrior's death?"

Not one stirred at his summons, and he felt, with a pang, that he was indeed alone. The executioner laid his hand upon the totem, and the Weasel uttered a scream of agony as if he had been scorched by a fiery brand.

"Listen," cried Flying Cloud. "The Weasel is not to die. We will cut the arrow from his shoulder, and then he will go forth where he will. But, he is an outcast from that hour. No tribe will take him in, no wigwam give him rest. He must live the life of a whelp upon the carrion he picks up."

"I do not ask life," yelled the chief. "Let me die now. I am ready for it. I would have killed you, dog. I would have left your bones to whiten in the sun. Do you hear? I am worthy of death, and wish for death. If you set me free it will be the worse for you, for I will follow you, and kill you."

"I fear you not," said Flying Cloud, shrugging his shoulders. "Go on, Gabenay. Do your work."

"I have touched the mark, and I find it the totem of the Huron. Fire and steel can take it away. I have the steel; who will give me a little fire?" yelled Gabenay.

A warrior advanced at the word, bearing in one hand a torch of pitch-pine, which he passed close to the eyes of the prisoner, who never winked, although his flesh was scorched.

The warriors again began their march, chanting as before. The burden now was denunciation. "Thou hast no wife, no name, no kindred among the Hurons. The maidens renounce thee. Thou hast no father among the Hurons; they know thee no more. Thou wilt sit no more in the councils of the Hurons; the wise men forget thee. Thou hast no brothers among the Hurons; the young men reject thee."

The torch hissed, the knife cut, and all mark of the totem disappeared from his shoulder. He was disgraced beyond redemption! They then unbound him, and with taunts and curses drove him out of the camp. He went slowly, with folded arms, looking back now and then at his tormentors, who were following him closely. But, his glance dwelt longest upon the face of the Flying Cloud. He was even seen to smile. At the edge of the brook he paused, lifted a little water in his hand, and cast it toward his tormentors. Then turning, with a slow and stately step, he buried himself in the forest. Flying Cloud, with an air of relief, gave the order to march. Floy had been watching his face during the hour of torture, and thought him a man of iron.

"You have made an enemy to the death," she said.

"What of that," he answered. "I am a chief of the Oneidas. Walk by my side, and I will aid you on the way."

CHAPTER XII.

THE WEASEL'S LAST BULLET.

RED HATCHET did not give up the chase yet. He had hopes that he alone could do more to rescue Floy from the hands of the enemy than their united force, for he knew that the Flying Cloud was watchful, and that while the band kept together little was to be done by force. Lying prostrate under the bushes, he had witnessed the degradation of the Weasel, and had seen him depart, pleased that this active chief was now the enemy of the Oneidas. The Weasel passed near the spot where the Onondaga lay, but gave no sign to indicate that he saw or heard anything of the sights or sounds which would have attracted his attention at any other time. Once or twice he put his hand to his blackened and bleeding shoulder, and took it away with an agonized look. Death would have been sport compared to this.

Red Hatchet let him pass, and then followed upon the track of the Oneidas. They pushed on like silent spirits, the chief keeping close by the side of Floy, and assisting her over the rugged road. There was something in the expression of his face which irresistibly reminded the Onondaga of some one he had seen, but he could not place him to a certainty. Where had he encountered that piercing eye before? He could not tell.

A warrior of the Oneidas, who had been glancing suspiciously from side to side, suddenly approached Flying Cloud and whispered in his ear. The chief nodded, and Red Hatchet saw this man, after a moment's pause, drop into the bushes by the roadside and disappear. The Onondaga did not know whether this movement was intended for him or for the Weasel, who would certainly track the Flying Cloud until one or the other was dead. The party passed on, and still the Oneida did not appear. The place into which he had dropped for concealment was a tangled undergrowth by the side of a narrow opening in the woods, containing about

half an acre. Red Hatchet did not move, and his patience was soon rewarded, for the Weasel appeared, following like a hound upon the scent of a fugitive. As he came opposite the place where the concealed Oneida lay, the brave rose and confronted him.

"Dog," he said, "why do you dare to follow upon the trail of brave men? You are not even a woman of the Herons. Turn back, then, thou thing without a name, and never more tread upon the soil which the Oneida and the Huron have a right to claim."

"See," said the Weasel, extending his hands, which were stained with blood, "you have taken from me all that makes a chief delight in living, and now you would even take from me the right to tread upon the soil of the country I love. Stand away, Rolling Thunder, and do not come between me and my vengeance."

"I will not turn back," replied Rolling Thunder. "A dead dog speaks to a warrior of the Oneidas. The path you must tread lies yonder."

The Weasel half turned away, and a look of triumphant malice was coming into the face of Rolling Thunder, when the chief made a lightning-like bound and grappled with him. So sudden was the movement that the warrior had no time to draw a weapon when he was locked in that deadly grapple for life or death. Red Hatchet saw two dusky bodies rolling about upon the green sod, tugging at each other's throats. They were evenly matched, for the Weasel made up in agility all he lacked in size. Rolling Thunder knew that the combat could have but one issue, and that was death to himself or the Weasel. Not a word more was spoken on either side while the terrible fight went on. With set teeth, laboring breath, and muscles strained to the utmost, the two men fought. They struggled up to their knees again. One of the Weasel's arms was clasped about the neck of his enemy and his muscular fingers were clutching his throat. Lurid gleams seemed to shoot from his eyes, and his breath came hard. His other hand clasped the wrist of the Oneida, which he would have released to draw his knife, and held it firmly. It was evident to the Onondaga that the Weasel would win, and, rising from his prostrate position, he walked out into the opening and

stood leaning against a tree, watching the fight. Neither of the combatants saw him, nor would it have made any difference if they had. They only saw each other. All at once the Weasel threw himself forward, and, by a dextrous sleight, threw the Oneida, and rose with his knee planted on his breast, and that iron hand compressing his throat. The Oneida, who had done much evil upon earth, knew that his time had come to pay the debt, but still he struggled on, though his life was going fast. Red Hatchet did not interfere, for he knew that Rolling Thunder deserved any fate which might befall him. It was over soon, and the Weasel snatched the knife from the girdle of his enemy and plunged it again and again into his heart. There was a quiver in the stalwart limbs, and Rolling Thunder was dead. Without rising, the Weasel cut the broad arrow from his arm, laughing in demoniac glee as his work was completed. Just then a hand was laid upon his shoulder, and he bounded to his feet, facing Red Hatchet, who stood before him, a knife in one hand, a hatchet in the other, and warned him to stand, by a lofty and commanding gesture which the Huron could not disregard.

"Weasel of the Hurons," said the chief, "I have known you long as a bold, bad man, whom no danger could daunt and no terrors drive back from the war-path. The road you have been treading has not come to the end I had marked out for you. It has been a bloody road, and the end is not yet."

"Let us fight," said the Huron.

"Have you no other work to do, Weasel? You have suffered a cruel wrong. Even I, your deadly enemy, who have hated you for years, will say that. It was cruel for the man you had loved and followed through so many bloody scenes, to cut the arrow of the tribe from your shoulder. If you fight with me, you are dead. The fight between you and Rolling Thunder has taken much of your strength, and Red Hatchet is not the coward to strike at a fainting man."

"Look, Red Hatchet of the Onondagas. I have hated you all these years, but you have never done me any other wrong than the one any warrior might do another upon the war-path. I must have vengeance upon the Flying Cloud. When that is done, I will come to you wherever I can find

THE RED SCALPER.

you, and say: 'I am the Weasel, and I will fight you until one of us is dead.' Shall it be so?"

"It is good," replied Red Hatchet. "It shall be as you say. But, before you go, I ask a promise at your hands. Whatever you do, you will not harm the beautiful woman who is the captive of the Flying Cloud, neither must you harm any of my friends. In the name of the Great Spirit, say that you will harm no one but the Oneida."

"It is said," replied the Weasel. "No one but the Flying Cloud shall suffer from me. See. This man has come out to meet me with only one bullet in his rifle and he has left the rest behind. This bullet is for the heart of Flying Cloud and do you think I would dare to waste it upon another."

"Then let each go his way," said Red Hatchet, and if we pass each other on the trail, neither of us need know the other. Go."

They parted, the strange compact having been made, and they plunged into the bushes upon different sides of the path. It was in keeping with the vindictive spirit of the Weasel to give up the thought of wreaking vengeance upon Red Hatchet, in order to avenge the greater wrong done him by his former friend and ally. His grim face never relaxed its intent look during the conference, and Red Hatchet could not but admire the steadfast purpose with which he followed out his plan of revenge.

"Let him go on," he muttered. "If he kills the Flying Cloud, good. It is one enemy the less. If the Flying Cloud kills him, he will trouble us no more; but a chief must not stain his hands with the blood of a Huron when the totem has been cut from his shoulder. I will go back to the boat again and tell them what has chanced."

The party kept on their course for some time, taking no heed of the absence of Rolling Thunder. Two hours passed on, and as he did not return Flying Cloud became uneasy for his safety and called a halt. The spot he chose for his rest was at the base of a rocky hill, near where a cool, bright spring bubbled from the rocks. A gourd, which some provident hunter had left there, was suspended from the limb of a small maple which grew near at hand. He took it down and brought some of the sparkling element to Floy.

"My heart is sad because you are grieved," he said, in a low tone. "Why will you not smile as you did in the house of your father?"

"The thing you ask of me is impossible," she answered. "How can I be happy, being your captive?"

"Is not my heart captive, too?" he cried. "Let the Pale Lily bloom as brightly for me as when she blossomed in the garden of her father's heart. I will be all to you from this time—kindred, friends, husband."

"Be silent," she said. "I will not hear you."

He said no more, but gave her the gourd and she drank freely of the water. He took a little, and gave the gourd to one of the Oneidas, who passed it among his companions. Two or three of the Indians now tightened their belts and set out on a run upon the return trail, taking their arms with them. Signals were heard between them at different parts of the forest, but they died away in the distance.

"Where have they gone?" asked Floy.

"The brave who left us an hour ago has not returned, and we love him so well that we can not go on without him," said Flying Cloud. "I fear some evil has come upon him."

"Whom do you fear?"

"The dead dog we have driven out from among us, who is called the Weasel. He will follow to be revenged upon us because we have cut the arrow from his shoulder."

"It was cruel in you. Was not this man your friend?"

"So let all suffer who dare to oppose me," said Flying Cloud. "I warn you not to go too far in your scorn of me, for the blood of a chief is hot and apt to stir at indignities. Look to it that you do not wrong yourself."

"I shall never think better of you than I do now. You waste your breath in vain, chief of the Oneidas. You have torn me from my home, separated me from the friends I love so dearly, and now ask me to love you. It is impossible."

"Then listen to me. I am a man who has met and overcome greater opposition than you can bring against me. Tomorrow I will tell you something which will surprise you much and explain much that you do not understand. I will say no more now."

He left her and went among the warriors, sending several

more out on a scout. Some of them were yet absent when the runners who had been sent in search of Rolling Thunder were heard returning. The warriors paused and listened, to gather from the sound whether they had any hope. The runners came nearer and nearer, and the cry broke out again distinctly, and every warrior dropped upon the sod and drew his blanket over his head, uttering a like mournful cry. No need to tell them now the fate of Rolling Thunder. They knew that he was dead as certainly as if they had seen his body. The death-cry from the lips of the runners had told them that. Five minutes after the three runners came into camp with bowed heads and sat down with their comrades, grief depicted upon every face.

At this moment came the crack of a rifle near at hand, and the bullet cut a lock of hair from the temple of Flying Cloud, who was the only man standing. All leaped to their feet, just in time to see the Weasel start out from behind a rock at the summit of the hill to witness the effect of his shot. Many rifles were pointed at him, and with a cry of disappointment he sunk down behind the rock. He had fired his last bullet.

"After him!" cried Flying Cloud. "Kill him as he has killed Rolling Thunder. He deserves to die!"

A dozen forms sprung up the cliff, and a hasty search began. But the Weasel had time enough to bury himself in the forest again, and knowing the uselessness of pursuit, Flying Cloud recalled his men and once more set out upon the long trail.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SECRET OF THE FOUNTAIN.

THEY traveled slowly, for Flying Cloud showed something seldom seen in an Indian, compassion for his captive and care lest she should sink under the fatigue of a foot journey through this wild region. She bore up bravely, and kept her eyes open for a chance to escape. But, kind as he might be to her, he kept strict watch upon her movements and quietly baffled every effort.

On they went by day over the tangled paths, over rocky hills, through devious passes, through deep morass and tangled fern, until they struck Canada Creek again, not far from the place where the Onondaga had thrown the Weasel from the cliff. They crossed the stream at last and traveled on until they reached the fountain. It was early in the afternoon, but here the chief called a halt, for he saw that his captive was weary. But, being now safe from pursuit—for he had heard nothing of the late prisoners nor of the Onondaga—the chief determined to send forward the main part of his force, and travel by a different path to his village. This decision being told to the warriors, all but six of them started out at once, leaving the rest by the fountain. The chief was gloomy for some reason. He sat with bowed head beside the spring, muttering to himself and looking at his captive from time to time.

“Do you think still of your ruined home, Lily of the Pale-Faces?” he asked.

“Can I ever forget it?” she said. “You do not know how happy I was there.”

“Whom do you blame most for tearing you from your home? The Oneidas or the Hurons?”

“Neither!” she said. “I blame that traitor with a white skin but black soul, who came into our happy home so treacherously, to give us up to the destroyer. I mean the wretch Carrington.”

"Perhaps he had a reason," said the other. "Do not blame him too much, or hate him without reason. He is my friend, and has done good service to the cause of France. You do him injustice."

"A rope would be the only justice he deserves, and that he may get what he deserves quickly, is my fervent prayer."

"Stop!" he cried, hoarsely. "Girl, do you know what you are saying? Have you no eyes? I, the Flying Cloud of the Oneidas, am that Samuel Carrington whom you hate so deadly!"

"You!" she cried, in alarm.

"I, proud girl! I have watched for two years, and have seen you growing more beautiful day by day. I have loved you with a devotion which seems wonderful to me all that time, and I registered a vow one day to take you and make you my wife. It was because I loved you that your friends did not die by the hatchet or rifle. Trust me no other reason would have sufficed to save you or them. They are not harmed, and you are safe."

"Silence, guilty wretch! I tremble in speaking to you. I can hardly believe it possible yet that you are what you claim to be, and that this is not a creation of the brain. Can that man live who has white blood to boast of, who can herd with painted fiends and lead them to the destruction of his kind?"

"Such things are only amazing to women—not to men," he said. "Do not affect a horror you are far from feeling. Let me tell you what I am and you will understand me better. My father is—or rather was, for he is long since dead—a Frenchman high in power in the Canadas. My mother was a beautiful girl of the Oneidas, who was taken prisoner in one of their incursions. My father loved me, and sent me to France to be educated. In that country I gained a love for the lilies on the white flag which is strong as my life. Any thing for the honor and glory of France! And so, when my father told me that much good would be done if I left the white men and joined myself to the Oneidas, I did not even hesitate, much as I loved to live in France. Since that hour I have lived among the Oneidas, and they love me. Now, you understand why I am the enemy of England."

"What of that?" Does it make it an honorable thing to creep into a house to betray it?"

"Be careful or you may arouse in me a hateful passion. Once more, listen to me. I am tired of this life, and at any time I choose to leave it, plenty awaits me in La Belle France. My father made his will in such a way that, if I tired of the Oneidas, I had something to live upon. Then, this is my offer. We will flee together, and in some pleasant home among the vines and vales of Burgundy, we will forget that I ever did aught of evil. Shall it be so?"

"Never!"

"Why do you speak so decisively? I am afraid you do not know me yet. You say you will not be my wife. I say, by Him who reigns over all, you shall, or else you die!"

"And I would die, sooner than link my destiny with such a monster! Any death is preferable to that which you offer me. I, the promised wife of an honest man, deem myself insulted by your love. Go! You are too base even for my anger. I am to blame for suffering you to ruffle my temper, and you shall not in future."

His face turned livid as he faced her. Even under his paint the change could be seen.

"You are insulted by my love," he cried. "You dare to speak of insult, when the proffer comes to you from the son of a marquis—to you, the daughter of a penniless ex-captain of foot! Do you think I will endure it? Beware that I do not drop the white man, and again take up the chief."

"You are a traitor, even to them," she said. "In the same breath with your offer to me you promise to desert them. There is nothing but falsehood in you. That vile Huron was not so vile as you."

"Come, we have had enough of this. You tempt me to do you harm, much as I love you. Think twice before you speak again, and do not forget that you are in my power."

"I can not forget that," she said. But, if I were in your power a thousand times, my answer would be the same. I refuse to consider your proposal for a moment. You may do with me as you will, but I will never be your wife. May God help me! I will slay myself rather than become either your slave or your wife. You have my answer."

"It will simply answer for the present. I will compel a change in your views before many days," he rejoined, in a half hiss, half growl.

He sent one of the men to catch some of the delicious trout which abound in those northern streams, and broiled some for their evening meal. The chief then gave the warriors permission to rest, taking upon himself the office of guard.

The stars came out one by one; the moon rose in the summer sky; still the captive maid sat beside the fountain, answering not a word to the mingled entreaties and threats of the half-breed. At last, in a rage, he went from her, and sat down upon the face of the cliff, a hundred feet away, thinking how he should tame this stubborn bird.

The sorrow-stricken but resolute girl, looking down into the pure fountain, uttered a low cry. The armed figure of a warrior arose from under the calm water, at her very feet? Red Hatchet stood in the fountain before her, his head just above the water.

"Can you swim?" whispered the Onondaga

"Perfectly."

"Then bend low," he said. "I will tell you what to do."

She stooped a moment, and then sprung suddenly to her feet and called to the chief in a stern, suppressed voice.

"Listen to me, Samuel Carrington, Flying Cloud, or any other evil name you choose to call yourself. I have said that I would not remain in your power. There is one way to freedom from your detested presence, and thus I seek it."

As she spoke, she threw up her hands and leaped into the fountain. It closed above her head, a few straggling curls of gold floated for a moment on the surface, and then dead silence followed. He ran to the fatal place. The fountain was troubled a little, the sand at the bottom bubbling slowly upward, and that was all. A thrill passed through his frame as he gazed. Where was she? Not at the bottom, yet he had seen her leap. He trembled and turned pale.

"This is terrible," he muttered. "The fates are against me. I feel cold. . Is my fate nigh to me?"

A tree hung over the fountain. As he spoke the branches parted, and something fell upon him suddenly. He felt a pang of pain and knew that he was stabbed. Turning like a

wounded snake, he caught a glimpse of a demoniac face near his, and knew that the Weasel had come for his revenge. He had dropped from the tree, knife in hand, and stabbed him in the breast. The wound was mortal, but still the demon struck blow after blow, accompanying each stroke by a fearful malediction upon the object of his hate.

"Die, white dog. Die, thief of a Frenchman! This to your heart! Ah-ha! A Huron never forgets. Who made me a dog? Who but you! Again to your heart!"

Flying Cloud seized the light form of the Weasel in his powerful arms and ran to the edge of the cliff, down which the Huron had plunged once before. The knife was again in his breast, but he flung himself headlong from the height upon the rocks beneath. The Indians above gazed a moment, horror-stricken, and were about to descend to aid their chief, when three rifles cracked. The enemy was upon them! Two fell, and the rest, awed by the loss of their chief, betook themselves to flight.

They had scarcely buried themselves in the bushes when the branches parted and Captain Hubbard and Charley, Jack Norton, Pomp and Sam ran out upon the other side with wild shouts of triumph. They ran straight to the fountain, and plunged in, one after another, leaving their weapons on the brink in the charge of Pomp and Sam. Jack Norton was first. As the clear water closed above him he shot downward for a second of time, and rose in one of those wonderful caves in which these mountains abound. The spring, where it bubbled from beneath the rock, had worked an opening three feet wide and two feet high. Within, there was a rocky platform, three feet wide and six feet long, and in it they saw Red Hatchet and Floy. Jack Norton clambered up the rocks and seized her in his arms, kissing her then and there, and pressing her passionately to his manly breast.

"For shame, Johnnie," she said, evidently not displeased, but blushing like the rose. "How can you act so? *Red Hatchet sees you!*"

"Don't talk around the house!" roared Jack. "I'm a king and you a queen of an enchanted land. Another kiss. There! Red Hatchet, you old hero, give me your honest

hand! I won't thank you, for I know you don't like it, but you deserve something more."

"Red Hatchet knew they would come here to camp," said the Onondaga. "That is why he went ahead, and came to the spring. There is but one man living except these, who knows the secret of this place, and that is Ralph Warren. See here, cappen."

Hubbard, who had been embracing his daughter, gave her up to her brother and stepped out on the platform beside the chief. He now saw that the roof of the little cave was nothing more than the heap of limestone piled about the hill. There were numerous small openings through which they could command the hill, and we now understand how the two men had so worried the Weasel and his band, as described in our opening chapter.

"No good to go out through water," said Red Hatchet. "Easier this way. Now see."

Stepping forward to the wall, he began to take away small blocks of limestone one after another, and in five minutes had made an opening large enough to permit the party to pass out one at a time. They did so, and the chief remained within and replaced the limestone, block by block, when he popped out from the opening of the spring so suddenly as to startle Pomp, who snatched up a rifle, but laughed when he saw what the apparition was.

"Gracious to goodness, but you's de wust Injin I ebber see'd," said the negro. "Was yer daddy a frog an' yer mudder a duck? Yah-yah! Ef de dibbil hisself eber catches you in de nex' worl' he'll hab to study de onpossibles. But, dis nigga's proud ob you; yes sah, dat I is. Sam, you brack nigger, w'at yer doin'? W'y don't yer ax Red Hatchet fur a chew of tobac', ef dat's w'ats yer mouf is open so wide fur?"

"I's glad, I guesses; dat's w'at de 'casion is," answered Sam.

"Den w'y didn't yer say so?" said Pomp.

But Red Hatchet was gone.

"Father," said Floy, "that wretch, Carrington, and Flying Cloud, the chief, are one and the same person. He now lies under the cliff. Go down and see if you can do him any good."

They went down together, leaving Floy and Jack Norton on the rock. Red Hatchet was there before them. The Weasel's scalp was his by priority of lien. The Weasel, who had fallen underneath, was crushed out of the semblance of humanity, and Flying Cloud was breathing his life away in fitful gasps, while the blood was gushing from numerous wounds, most of which were mortal. He lifted himself by an effort and gazed at them. Perhaps the agony of death had softened him, for he had not the vindictive light in his eyes which had burned there so long like a baleful beacon-light.

"Where is the girl?" he said, quickly. "Speak. Do not keep me in suspense."

"She is safe," said Hubbard. "You have done her no harm."

"I thank God for that," he muttered. "I should die hard, indeed, with that upon my soul. I wish you would believe I am glad I have not her death to answer for. Take away that carrion! Pah; I shall soon be as he is. Send a letter to the Governor of Canada, and say to him that Marquis Compenéy, the Flying Cloud of Oneida, is dead. I wish I could see the girl, if only for a moment. Why did I ever look upon her alluring face? Lift me and carry me up to the fountain. Never mind the wounds. I am death-struck, and it can make no difference."

They obeyed this last request, and by their united strength bore him up the slope to the spring, the blood from his ghastly wounds marking the way. Floy came to him at once. "It is a great deal I ask of you," he said, "but not so much from one who is dying. I ask you to touch my forehead with your lips and say, 'I forgive you.'"

She did it without a moment's hesitation. He smiled, and raised his hand to the spot her lips had touched. In the effort life passed away; the Marquis Compenéy, the Flying Cloud, was at rest. They buried him beside the fountain. The Weasel's body disappeared; none knew where, but it was observed that Red Hatchet was gone for a while, and that when he returned a very satisfied look rested upon his face.

The homeward journey was not so sad as that which Floy

had made in the company of Compenéy. They found the boat safe at the point where they had left it, and picked up the other boat at the place where Flying Cloud had landed.

Captain Hubbard was not to be frightened away from his estate, and the Onondaga and Norton left them at the outlet and kept on their course for Oswego. Jack did not go until he had told the captain of his love for Floy, and received a hearty assent to his suit.

A year after, when Frontenac had fallen, they were married. Red Hatchet was present at the ceremony, looking on with mild complacency. When all was over, and every one had congratulated the young couple, he was seen standing by himself, looking a little sad. Floy went to him.

"Have you no good word for me, Red Hatchet?" she said, softly.

"All good words for Pale Lily," he said. "See; I am a withered pine! Once I had a squaw whom I loved, and children who would have been brave. No shoot of the old stem remains. Be happy; Red Hatchet will be happy because you are so. Now he must go."

Making a sweeping gesture of farewell to all within the room, he left the house. They ran to the doors and windows to see him depart. On the borders of the forest he turned, swept them another eloquent gesture, and then the leaves hid him from view.

Another episode in his eventful life was ended.

THE END.

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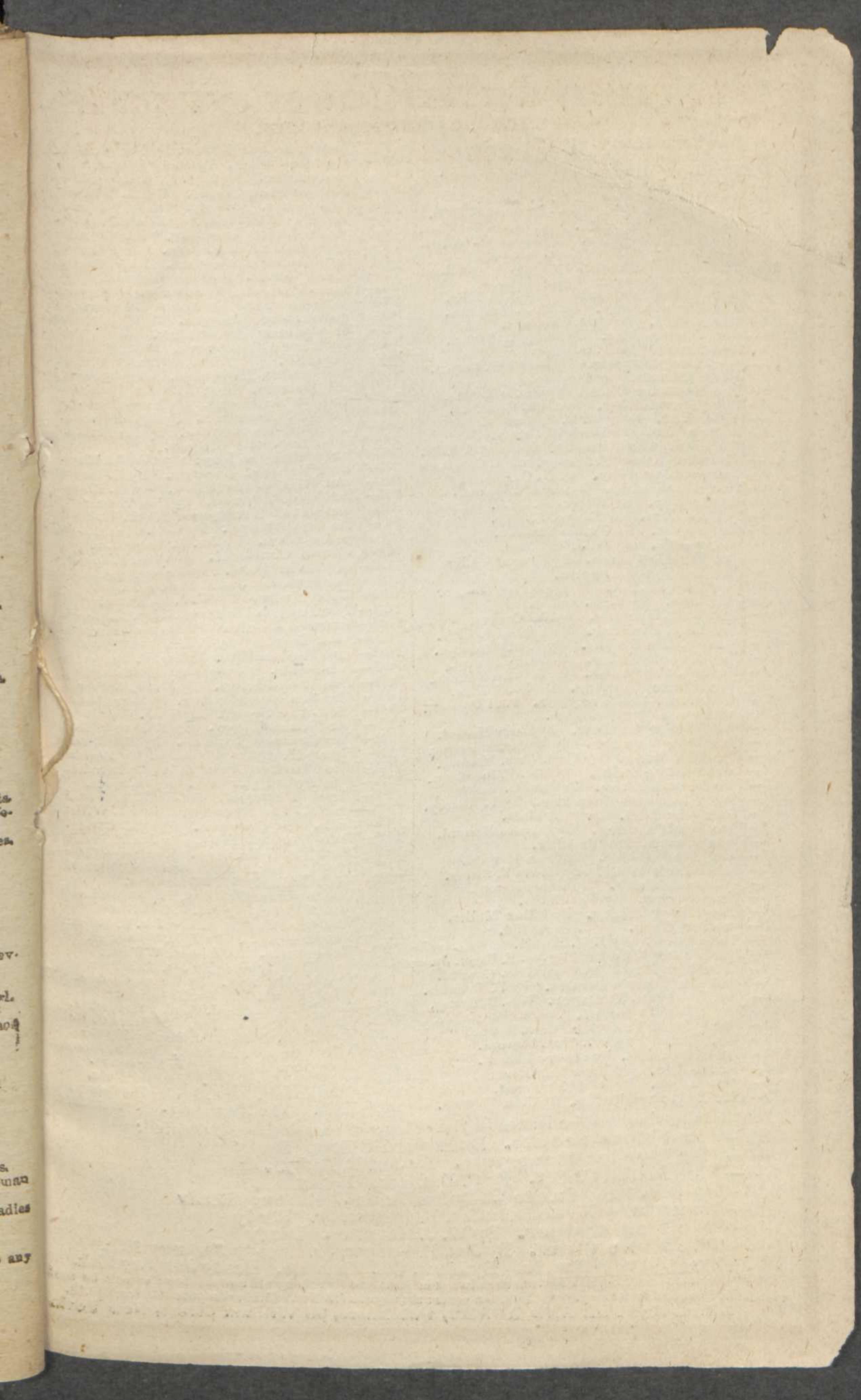
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